

UNDERSTANDING INDIA

UG – I SEMESTER

(For B.Com/BBA/BA English/BA Sociology)

Paper Code : BCP17VAC



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(A Central University)

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UNDERSTANDING INDIA

Course Objective

To develop learners' understanding of India's geographical, historical, social, cultural, and political dimensions, enabling them to critically analyze the continuity, diversity, and evolution of Indian society.

Unit I : Geography of India

India on the Map of the World and its Neighboring Countries - Geographical Diversities.

Unit II : History of India

India's Freedom Struggle - An Introduction to Indian knowledge Systems.

Unit III : Communicating Culture

Oral Narratives - Myths, Tales and Folklore - Introduction to the Tribal Cultures of India.

Unit IV : Indian Social Structure

Continuity and Change of the Indian Social Structure – Caste - Community - Class - Gender.

Unit V : Understanding Indian Polityt

The Evolution of State in India - Nature and Origin - Interpreting India: Traditional, Modern and Contemporary - Constitution as a Living Document.

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1. Choudhry, S., Khosla, M., & Mehta, P. B. (Eds.). (2016). *The Oxford handbook of the Indian Constitution*. Oxford University Press.
2. Gupta, D. (2000). *Interrogating caste: Understanding hierarchy and difference in Indian society*. Penguin Books India.

Course Outcomes: After completion of the course, learners will be able to:

CO1: Understand India from global, national and local perspectives.

CO2: Analyze key events of India's freedom struggle and understand the contributions of traditional Indian knowledge systems to society. .

CO3: Appreciate the multicultural and multifaceted nature of India.

CO4: Examine the continuity and changes in India's social structure, including caste, community, class, and gender dynamics.

CO5: Analyze the structure, functioning, and evolution of the Indian state and assess the Constitution's role in shaping democratic governance and contemporary society.

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UNIT – I**Lesson 1.1 - Geographical Location of India****1.0 Learning Objectives**

After studying this lesson, you should be able to:

- Explain India's location on the world map.
- Describe the latitudinal and longitudinal extent of India.
- Identify the neighbouring countries of India.
- Locate India and its neighbouring countries on a political map.
- Understand the importance of India's Location.

1.1 Introduction

Understanding India's location is important for understanding its relationships with neighbouring countries and the world. India has become an emerging global power. Its Strategic importance, Geopolitical significance, geography influences on national development, international relations, trade, security, and environmental sustainability.

India is one of the oldest civilizations and one of the second largest countries in word and seventh largest in Asia world. Its extensive coastline, Himalayan mountain ranges, fertile plains, deserts, plateaus, islands, and river systems make it one of the most geographically diverse countries on Earth.

India's strategic position in the Indian Ocean has made it an important centre of maritime trade for thousands of years. Even today, major international shipping routes pass close to India's coastline, making it an important player in global trade and maritime security.

This lesson introduces students to India's location on the world map, its geographical extent, neighbouring countries and the strategic importance of its position.

1.2 Assessment of Prior Knowledge

Before beginning this unit, answer the following questions. You need not worry if you cannot answer them correctly. They are merely intended to assess your existing knowledge.

What Do You Already Know?

Answer the following questions.

1. On which continent is India located?
2. Name any five neighbouring countries of India.
3. Which ocean lies to the south of India?
4. What is the capital city of India?
5. What is the standard time followed in India?

If you answered most of the questions correctly, you already possess a basic understanding of India's geography.

1.3 Introduction to India on the World Map

The location of a nation on the world map plays an important role in its diplomatic, economic, and strategic policies. India is holding a key position on the global map by positioning in the Northern Hemisphere longitudinally and in the Eastern Hemisphere latitude. Most of India forms a peninsula. Officially it is the Republic of India. India covers a total land area of about 3,287,263 sq. km with a coastline stretching for 11,098.81 km. India has a land border of 15,200 kilometres. India occupies nearly three-fourths of South Asia's geographical area.

1.4 Geographical Location of India

The geographical location of a country determines its physical environment, climate, biodiversity, economic activities, transportation, and foreign relations. India is located in the central part of South Asia extending into the Indian Ocean like a giant peninsula surrounded by water on three sides: the Indian Ocean to the south, the Arabian Sea to the southwest, and the Bay of Bengal to the southeast. India enjoys a strategic position among the continents of Europe, Africa, and East Asia. It bridges the Eastern and Western Worlds in trade, cultural exchanges, and maritime activities.

Learning Activity: 1

Using a world political map:

1. Locate India.
2. Identify the countries to the north, west, east, and south.
3. Name the seas and oceans surrounding India.
4. Identify the continent where India is located.

Write your observations.

1.4.1 Absolute Location of India

The mainland stretches between latitudes $8^{\circ}4'N$ and $37^{\circ}6'N$ and longitudes $68^{\circ}7'E$ and $97^{\circ}25'E$, covering 29 degrees. The southeast and southwest of the mainland, lie the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the Bay of Bengal and the Lakshadweep Islands in the Arabian Sea, respectively. The southernmost point of the Indian Union 'Indira Point' got submerged under the sea water in 2004 during the Tsunami. The sun rises almost two hours earlier in Arunachal Pradesh than in Gujarat due to earth rotation

1.4.2 Relative Location of India

The relative location shows the position of a country in relation to other countries, oceans, rivers, plains, mountains and continents. India is situated:

- East of the Arabian Peninsula and West of Southeast Asia.
- North of the Indian Ocean and South of the Himalayan mountain ranges.
- Between the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal.

This location in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) gives importance in global maritime affairs.

1.4.3 The Tropic of Cancer

The Tropic of Cancer is the Earth's northernmost circle of latitude where the Sun can be seen directly overhead. which occurs on the June solstice. The Tropic of Cancer, positioned at $23^{\circ}30'N$, passes almost through the middle of India effectively divides the country into almost two halves. It passes through the following States:

1. Gujarat 2. Rajasthan 3. Madhya Pradesh 4. Chhattisgarh 5. Jharkhand 6. West Bengal, 7. Tripura 8. Mizoram

The Tropic of Cancer defines the northern boundary of the tropical zone, the region between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn, determines the angle of sunlight, influences climate, seasons, agriculture and vegetation, helps divide Earth's climate zones, useful in geography and astronomy education for understanding Earth's rotation, revolution, and the distribution of solar energy.

Learning Activity: 2

Look at a political map of the world and answer the following.

1. Identify the continent where India is located.
2. Identify the oceans surrounding India.
3. Locate India's neighbouring countries.
4. Find the Equator and the Tropic of Cancer.
5. Observe whether India lies entirely in the Northern Hemisphere.

Record your observations.

1.4.4 Indian Standard Time (IST)

The common time standard, for transportation, communication, business, and administration is fixed with reference to IST. To maintain uniformity, India follows Indian Standard Time (IST). IST is the time zone observed throughout the Republic of India. IST is 5 hours and 30 minutes ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) or Coordinated Universal Time (UTC+5:30). The Standard Meridian of India is 82°30' East Longitude, passing near Mirzapur in Uttar Pradesh. Thusm IST line is significant for India in all its social affairs.

1.5 Geographical Extent

India's position on the world map has earned it the title of the 'Gateway of South Asia' and the 'Heart of the Indian Ocean Region'

1. The northernmost point - Indira Col in Ladakh.
2. The southernmost point - Kanyakumari.
3. The easternmost point - Kiku in Arunachal Pradesh
4. The westernmost point Gugar motiin Gujarat.
5. The extended southernmost point - Indira Point in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands

The vastness contributes significantly to variations in climatic conditions, rainfall, soil types, vegetation, agricultural practices, language, habits and traditions. India snowfall in Himalayas, tropical maritime climate in costal region. Rainfall in Kerala due to Southwest Monsoon, whereas in Tamil Nadu during the Northeast (Retreating) Monsoon. Cactus and thorny shrubs dominate the Thar Desert, while pine, deodar, and fir forests thrive in the Himalayan region. Coconut trees flourish in Kerala, whereas only sparse vegetation survives in Ladakh.

1.6 Importance of India's Location

India enjoys one of the most advantageous geographical locations in the world as Gateway Between East and West. India connects Europe, West Asia, Central Asia, Southeast Asia, and East Asia through land and sea routes. Ancient trade routes such as the Silk Route and maritime spice routes passed through or near India. India occupies a prominent place in world affairs because of:

1. Large population
2. Democratic political system
3. Growing economy
4. Scientific achievements
5. Information technology sector
6. Space technology
7. Military capability
8. Cultural heritage

India actively participates in international organizations such as the United Nations, G20, BRICS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), the Commonwealth, and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

1.7 Summary

For undergraduate students, understanding India's position on the world map and its relations with neighbouring countries provides valuable insights into geography, international relations, national security, economic development, and regional integration. The India's location has shaped its history, culture, economy, and international relations for thousands of years. India's position in Indian ocean strategically acts as a bridge between East and West.

1.8 Key Terms

- **Eastern Hemisphere** – The half of the Earth that lies east of the Prime Meridian and west of the 180° meridian.
- **Greenwich Mean Time (GMT)** – The mean solar time at the Prime Meridian (0° longitude) at Greenwich, England.
- **Indian Ocean Region** – The area surrounding and including the Indian Ocean and its neighbouring countries.
- **Indian Standard Time (IST)** – The standard time of India, based on 82½° east longitude and 5½ hours ahead of GMT.

- **Indira Point** – The southernmost point of India, located on Great Nicobar Island.
- **Northeast (Retreating) Monsoon** – Seasonal winds that blow from the northeast and bring rainfall mainly to southeastern India during October–November.
- **Northern Hemisphere** – The half of the Earth that lies north of the Equator.
- **Southwest Monsoon** – Seasonal winds that bring most of India's rainfall from June to September. **Tropic of Cancer** – An imaginary line at about $23\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ north latitude that passes through India.
- **Tsunami** – A series of large sea waves caused mainly by undersea earthquakes or volcanic eruptions.

1.9 Self Assessment Questions

1.9.1 Multiple Choice Questions

Choose the correct answer

Multiple Choice Questions

1. The Standard Meridian passes through:
 - a) Delhi b) Kolkata c) Mirzapur d) Mumbai
2. India lies in:
 - a) Southern Hemisphere b) Northern Hemisphere
 - c) Western Hemisphere d) Polar Region
3. The Tropic of Cancer divides India into:
 - a) Three parts b) Two nearly equal halves c) Four regions
 - d) Northern and coastal regions
4. India's southern boundary is formed by:
 - a) Arabian Sea b) Bay of Bengal c) Indian Ocean d) Pacific Ocean

(**Answers:** 1. c) Mirzapur; 2. b) Northern Hemisphere;

3. b) Two nearly equal halves; 4. c) Indian Ocean)

1.9.2 Fill in the blanks

1. India lies between _____ $^{\circ}$ N and _____ $^{\circ}$ N latitude.
2. The Standard Meridian of India is _____ $^{\circ}$ E.
3. The Tropic of Cancer passes through _____ Indian states.

4. India lies entirely in the _____ Hemisphere.
5. Indian Standard Time is _____ hours ahead of GMT.

(Answers: 1. 8°4' and 37°6' N; 2. 82°30' E; 3. 8; 4. Northern; 5. 5½.)

1.9.3 Short answer questions

1. What is meant by Peninsula?
2. Write a note on total land coverage of India
3. What do you mean by Indian Ocean Region?
4. What is Tropic of Cancer?
5. What is IST?
6. What is the geographical location of India?
7. What are the latitudinal and longitudinal extents of mainland India?
8. Name the three water bodies surrounding India.
9. Why does India have varied climatic conditions?
10. Why is India's location important in the Indian Ocean Region?

1.9.4 Long Answer Questions

1. Explain the geographical location of India and its importance.
2. Describe the geographical extent of India and explain how its vastness contributes to variations in climate, vegetation, agriculture, and lifestyle.
3. Explain why India is considered strategically important in the Indian Ocean Region.
4. Describe the importance of India's geographical location in connecting the Eastern and Western worlds.
5. Explain the major factors that contribute to India's prominent position in world affairs.

1.9.5 Case Study

Why Was India Called the Golden Bird – Despite Low Gold Production

India has long been known as the “Sone Ki Chidiya” – the Golden Bird. But surprisingly, India has never been among the world’s top gold producers. In spite, India was known as Golder Bird because of its extraordinary wealth, flourishing trade, fertile lands, precious gems, thriving industries, rich intellectual heritage and remarkable cultural achievements. For centuries, it stood as one of the most prosperous regions in the world, attracting merchants, scholars, and travellers from every

corner of the globe. As modern India continues to grow and innovate, the spirit of the Golden Bird lives on, inspiring future generations to build an even brighter future.

1.10 Study Guide

After completing this section, you should be able to:

- Locate India accurately on a world map.
- State India's geographical coordinates.
- Explain the concepts of absolute and relative location.
- Describe the significance of the Tropic of Cancer and the Standard Meridian.
- Discuss how India's peninsular location contributes to its strategic and economic importance.

1.11 References

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Lesson 1.2 – Size, Shape And Boundaries Of India

1.2.0 Learning Objectives

After studying this section, you will be able to:

- Explain the size and shape of India.
- Describe the physical extent of India from north to south and east to west.
- Identify India's land and maritime boundaries.
- Explain the significance of India's coastline and island territories.
- Discuss the strategic importance of India's geographical shape and boundaries.

1.2.1 Introduction

India consists of a wide variety of landscapes, climates, languages and cultures. Climate, natural resources, economic activities, transportation, defence, and cultural diversity are greatly influenced by the size and shape of a country. India's geographical area leads to remarkable physical diversity. India covers geographical variation snow-capped Himalayas to Kanyakumari longitudinally, and the deserts of Gujarat and Rajasthan to the hills of Arunachal Pradesh latitude. India's peninsular shape gives a long coastline and a commanding position over major international sea routes, which contributed to India's maritime trade, defence capabilities and cultural exchanges with other parts of the world.

1.2.2 Size of India

India covers a land area of approximately 3,287,263 square kilometres, accounting for about 2.4 percent of the world's total geographical area. This makes it the Seventh largest country in the world by area and second largest country in Asia after China. The Indian subcontinent shares a land boundary of approximately 15,200 kilometres, and its coastline, including the mainland, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and Lakshadweep Islands, spans 7,516.6 kilometres (reassessed as 11,098.81 kilometres in April, 2025). India supports nearly 18% of the world population (1.47 billion people and ranks number one) with high density which shows the importance of effective resource management. Over all latitudinal and longitudinal extent of about 30°. The east-west dimension of India is 2,933

kilometre and north-south extent is 3,214 kilometres. The latitudinal extent influences the duration of day and night as one move from south to north by 2 hours.

Learning Activity: 1

Using an atlas:

1. Measure the approximate distance between Kashmir and Kanyakumari.
2. Compare this with the distance between Gujarat and Arunachal Pradesh.
3. Which distance is greater—north to south or east to west?

Write your findings in your notebook.

1.2.3 Shape of India

India has a roughly triangular or diamond or peninsular shape. The Himalayan Mountains forming its broad northern base and the Indian Ocean tapering towards the South. India is Bounded by the young fold mountains in the northwest, north, and northeast, India tapers southward from about 22° north latitude, it begins to taper, and extends towards the Indian Ocean, dividing it into two seas, the Arabian Sea on the west and the Bay of Bengal on its east. The distinctive features of the Shape of India are as follows:

- It has a northern landmass Border (natural mountain barriers) and narrowing southern peninsula extending into the Indian Ocean.
- Coastlines on the eastern and western giving rise to sea routes and rich marine resources
- It has diverse climatic conditions.

1.2.3.1 Significance of Shape of India:**1. The Himalayas – Earth's Roof and Natural Guard**

The Himalayan range is India's natural boundary and provides 70% of India's freshwater through rivers. It protects India from cold winds originating in Central Asia and serve as a natural barrier against invasions.

2. *Maritime Advantage*

The triangular peninsula projects deep into the Indian Ocean, providing opportunities for maritime trade, naval security, and fishing.

3. *Monsoon Climate*

The surrounding seas influence the southwest and northeast monsoons, making India one of the world's important monsoon regions.

4. *Rich Biodiversity*

The varied shape and physical features create diverse ecosystems such as mountains, plains, deserts, plateaus, forests, islands, and coastal regions

5. *Trade and Commerce*

The long coastline has facilitated international trade since ancient times. Important ports connect India with Asia, Africa, Europe, and Australia.

6. *Strategic Importance*

Central position in the Indian Ocean is significant for international shipping routes and security.

1.2.3.2 India as a Peninsula

Land mass surrounded by waterbodies in three sides and land mass in one side is called peninsula. India is a triangular peninsula. Its landmass tapers southwards into the Indian Ocean, into triangular projection with Arabian Sea to the west, the Bay of Bengal to the east. Indo-Gangetic Plain, which separates the peninsula from the Himalayan mountain range. The convergence of coastlines towards Kanyakumari (Cape Comorin), forms triangular shape. The significant physical region of India, known for its rich natural resources, fertile river valleys, forests, diverse wildlife and economic importance. This geographical attribute significantly influences its climate, culture, and strategic importance.

Important Features of the Indian Peninsula

- The Indian Peninsula is the southern part of India, surrounded by water on three sides.
- The peninsula has a triangular shape and tapers southwards into the Indian Ocean.

- It is part of the ancient Gondwana Land, an ancient landmass
- The peninsula consists mainly of the Deccan Plateau.
- Significant for its iron ore, manganese, coal, bauxite and offshore oil reserves.
- The Western Ghats run along the western coast and are higher and more continuous.
- The Eastern Ghats run along the eastern coast and are lower and discontinuous.
- Rivers such as the Godavari, Krishna, Kaveri (Cauvery), and Mahanadi flow eastward and Narmada and Tapi (Tapti) flow westward.
- It has a long coastline of about 11,200 km (including islands).
- Rich in minerals, forests, fertile river valleys, fisheries, and marine resources.

Thus, Indian Peninsula is a region of great geographical, economic, and strategic importance.

1.2.4 Boundaries of India

1.2.4.1 Land boundaries of India

Land boundaries of India are being shared with the following countries:
1. Pakistan (North-West) 2. China (North and North-East) 3. Nepal (North)
4. Bhutan (North-East) 5. Bangladesh (East) 6. Myanmar (East) 7. Afghanistan (through the Union Territory of Ladakh)

1.2.4.2 Maritime boundaries of India

India has maritime boundaries with:
1. Sri Lanka; 2. Maldives; 3. Indonesia; 4. Thailand; (through maritime zones) 5. Myanmar; (maritime boundary)

1.2.4.3 Coastline of India

India is surrounded by water on three sides:
➤ Arabian Sea – West, Bay of Bengal – East, Indian Ocean – South
This gives India a coastline of about 11,200 km, including the mainland and islands. Mainland Coastline: 7870.51 km and Island Coastline: 3,228.30 km (reassessed in April 2025). This Coastal line is divided into two divisions as follows:

Western Coast: Lies along the Arabian Sea. Extends from Gujarat to

Kerala. Includes the Konkan, Kannad, and Malabar coasts.

Eastern Coast: Lies along the Bay of Bengal. Extends from West Bengal to Tamil Nadu. Includes the Northern Circars and Coromandel Coast.

1.2.4.4 Island Territories of India

India has two major island groups:

Andaman and Nicobar Islands	Lakshadweep Islands
Located in the Bay of Bengal. Capital: Port Blair. The southernmost point of India, Indira Point , is located here	Located in the Arabian Sea. Capital: Kavarat Comprise 36 coral islands.

Learning Activity: 2

Identify Extreme Points of India

Knowing the extreme points of India helps us understand its geographical extent.

1.2.4.5 Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)

An Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is an area extending up to 200 (370 km) nautical miles from a country's coastline into sea. Special rights to explore and use marine resources in the EEZ are given to the country. India has an EEZ of approximately 2.37 million square kilometres. Importance of India's EEZ: Fishing, Offshore oil and natural gas. Marine minerals. Renewable ocean energy. Scientific research. Maritime security.

Learning Activity: 3

Locate the following on a map:

- Arabian Sea
- Bay of Bengal
- Indian Ocean
- Western Coast
- Eastern Coast
- Kanyakumari

Write one importance of each feature.

1.2.5 Strategic Importance of India

India's geographical location has shaped its history for millennia. India's location is strategic because it controls key sea lanes in the Indian

Ocean. Access to the Indian Ocean enabled maritime trade with Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East, contributing significantly to its economic prosperity and maritime security. This strategic location allows India to project its influence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and beyond. This access to global markets promotes economic growth and development. The development of ports and infrastructure further enhances these economic benefits.

India is actively promoting regional connectivity through initiatives such as the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC). These initiatives aim to improve trade, transport, and communication links between India and its neighbours.

The future prospects for India in leveraging its strategic location are bright. As the global economy shifts towards Asia, India is well-positioned to become a major economic and political power. By investing in infrastructure, promoting regional cooperation, and strengthening its security capabilities, India can fully realize its potential.

1.2.6 Summary

India covers an area of 3.287 million sq. km, making it the 7th largest country in the world. It has a triangular (peninsular) shape, surrounded by the Arabian Sea, Bay of Bengal, and the Indian Ocean. India extends 3,214 km from north to south and 2,933 km from east to west. The country shares land boundaries with Pakistan, China, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Myanmar, with Bangladesh having the longest international land border. India has an extensive coastline of about 11,098.81km, supporting trade, fisheries, tourism, and maritime security. The Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep enhance India's strategic and economic significance. India's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) provides access to valuable marine resources and strengthens its role in the Indian Ocean Region.

1.2.7 Key Terms

- **Coastline:** The boundary where land meets the sea.
- **Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ):** A maritime zone where a coastal state has rights to exploit marine resources.

- **Indira Point:** It was significantly affected by the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, resulting in changes to its elevation.
- **Island Territory:** A group of islands governed as part of a country.
- **Kanyakumari:** It is famous as the meeting point of the Arabian Sea, the Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean.
- **Peninsula:** A landmass surrounded by water on three sides.

1.2.8 Self Assessment Questions

1.2.8.1 Fill in the Blanks

1. India is the _____ largest country in the world by area.
2. India's total area is _____ square kilometres.
3. India's coastline is approximately _____ kilometres long.
4. The southernmost point of mainland India is _____.
5. India has two major island groups: _____ and _____.

(Answers: 1. Seventh; 2. 3,287,263; 3. 7,516.6; 4. Kanyakumari; 5. Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep)

1.2.8.2 Multiple Choice Questions

Choose the correct Answer

Multiple Choice Questions

1. India's shape is best described as:
 - a) Circular b) Rectangular c) Triangular (Peninsular) d) Oval
2. Which of the following is India's longest international land border?
 - a) Pakistan b) China c) Bangladesh d) Nepal
3. Which island group is located in the Arabian Sea?
 - a) Andaman and Nicobar Islands b) Lakshadweep c) Sri Lanka d) Maldives
4. Indira Point is located in:
 - a) Gujarat b) Kerala c) Lakshadweep d) Andaman and Nicobar Islands
5. India's EEZ extends up to:
 - a) 50 nautical miles b) 100 nautical miles c) 200 nautical miles d) 500 nautical miles

(Answers: 1. c) Triangular (Peninsular); 2. c) Bangladesh; 3. b) Lakshadweep; 4. d) Andaman and Nicobar Islands; 5. c) 200 nautical miles.

1.2.8.3 Short Answer Questions

1. State the total geographical area of India?
2. What is the distance of north–south extent of India?
3. What is the distance of east–west extent of India?
4. Name the three major water bodies surrounding the Indian peninsula.
5. Between which longitudes do the mainland of India extend?
6. What is the approximate length of India's land frontier?

1.2.8.4 Long Answer Questions

1. Explain the geographical position of India in relation to the Arabian Sea, Bay of Bengal, and Indian Ocean.
2. Discuss the significance of India's large geographical area in shaping its physical diversity.
3. Explain how India's size contributes to variations in climate, vegetation, soil, agriculture, and human activities.
4. Describe India's latitudinal and longitudinal extent and explain how these affect the country's geographical conditions.
5. Explain the importance of the Tropic of Cancer in understanding the size, shape, and climate of India.
6. Explain why India occupies an important geographical position in South Asia despite occupying only about 2.4% of the world's geographical area.
7. Discuss how India's size and shape have influenced its economic activities and regional development.

1.2.8.5 Case Study

India's Ports and International Trade

India's long coastline has enabled the development of major ports such as: Mumbai; Kandla (Deendayal Port); Chennai; Visakhapatnam; Kochi; Kolkata and Paradip

These ports handle a large share of India's international trade, facilitating exports and imports of petroleum, machinery, textiles, agricultural products, and manufactured goods. They also support employment, industrial growth, and regional development.

Analyse the contribution of each Port in promoting the exports and imports of out country.

1.2.9 Study Guide

- Remember key factors such as total area, geographical extent, latitudinal extent, coastline area, water bodies, extreme points.
- Shape of India: Peninsular shape
- Location: Absolute location and relative location, tropic of cancer
- Geographical significance: lies in the Northern and Eastern Hemispheres, central position in South Asia, connects West Asia, Europe, Africa, Southeast Asia, and East Asia, strategic importance in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

1.2.10 References

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Lesson 1.3 – India's Neighbouring Countries – Land Boundaries

1.3.0 Learning Objectives

After studying this section, you will be able to:

- Explain the concept of a neighbouring country.
- Identify India's land and maritime neighbours.
- Explain each neighbour's location, historical background and major rivers and mountains

1.3.1 Introduction

Every nation shares geographical, historical, cultural, political and economic relationships with its neighbours. These relationships influence trade, security, diplomacy, environmental cooperation and regional development. Studying India's neighbouring countries helps us understand the geographical, political, and cultural importance of the region. India's strategic location and friendly relations with its neighbours play an important role in regional peace, security, economic development, and cultural exchange. India is a large country located in South Asia and shares its borders with several neighbouring countries.

There are many types of borders that are shared by India other than the international borders, such as coastal borders, ocean borders, neighbouring island borders, Coastal states, and states with international borders. India shares its borders with nine countries.

It has seven land neighbours—Pakistan, Afghanistan, China, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Myanmar—and two maritime neighbours, Sri Lanka and the Maldives. The Gulf of Mannar and Palk Strait divide Sri Lanka and India.

India follows the **Neighbourhood First Policy**, which aims to strengthen friendly relations and regional cooperation through dialogue, development partnerships, connectivity projects and people-to-people contacts.

Thus, India is bordered by Afghanistan and Pakistan in the north-west; by China, Nepal and Bhutan in the north and northeast; and by Bangladesh and Burma (Myanmar) in the east. It is bounded by the Arabian Sea in the

southwest; by Bay of Bengal in the southeast; and by the Indian Ocean in the south. The narrow channel of Palk Strait and the Gulf of Mannar separates the island nation of Sri Lanka from the Indian mainland.

Learning Activity: 1

Check the Neighbouring Countries of India on Map to get the exact idea of the Neighbouring Countries of India.

1.3.2 Pakistan**1.3.2.1 Introduction**

Pakistan lies to the northwest of India, sharing a 3,323 km long border. The two countries were part of undivided British India until 1947. Key border crossings include Wagah (Punjab) and Attari (Amritsar). Pakistan was created on 14 August 1947 following the Partition of India. The two countries share deep historical, cultural and linguistic ties because they were once part of British India. While relations have been politically strained, they share strong cultural and linguistic links.

1.3.2.2 Location

Republic of Pakistan lies on the north-western side of India. Pakistan is a South Asian country that has a coastline along the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Oman. It has a land area of 881,913 sq.km. The Indian states of Jammu and Kashmir, Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Punjab share their borders with Pakistan. Pakistan is bounded by Iran to the west, Afghanistan to the northwest and north, China to the northeast, and India to the east and southeast. The coast of the Arabian Sea forms its southern border. The international boundary of India with Pakistan was decided by the Radcliffe Line after the partition of India in 1947. The capital of Pakistan is Islamabad.

1.3.2.3 Historical Background

Before 1947, India and Pakistan formed a single political entity under British rule. Following the partition of British India on 14 August 1947 Pakistan came into existence. Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who became Pakistan's first Governor-General.

At the time of independence, Pakistan consisted of two geographically separate regions—West Pakistan (present-day Pakistan) and East Pakistan

(present-day Bangladesh)—which were separated by about 1,600 kilometres of Indian territory. Political, economic, and linguistic differences between the two regions eventually led to the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971. As a result, East Pakistan became the independent nation of Bangladesh on 16 December 1971.

Today, Pakistan is a federal parliamentary republic comprising four provinces, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh, Punjab, Province and Balochistan. Each Province is further divided into districts. Its history continues to influence its political institutions, cultural identity, and relations with neighbouring countries, particularly India, Afghanistan, China, and Iran.

1.3.2.4 Major Rivers and Mountains

Major Rivers of Pakistan

1. Indus River – The longest and most important river in Pakistan.
2. Jhelum River 3. Chenab River 4. Ravi River 5. Sutlej River 6. Kabul River 7. Swat River 8. Gilgit River 9. Hunza River 10. Kurram River

Most of the rivers originate in or flow through India before entering Pakistan.

Major Mountain Ranges in Pakistan

1. Karakoram 2. Himalayas 3. Hindu Kush 4. Sulaiman Mountains 5. Safed Koh 6. Kirthar Mountains 7. Salt Range 8. Toba Kakar Range

Major Peaks in Pakistan

1. K2 (8,611 m) – Second-highest mountain in the world. 2. Nanga Parbat (8,126 m) 3. Gasherbrum I (8,080 m) 4. Broad Peak (8,051 m) 5. Gasherbrum II (8,035 m)

They are essential to Pakistan's geography, agriculture, water resources, hydropower generation, and tourism.

Learning Activity: 2

Prepare a table comparing India and Pakistan under the following headings:

- Capital
- Currency
- Official Language(s)
- Major River
- National Sport (traditional or widely followed)

Main Agricultural Products

1.3.3 China

1.3.3.1 Introduction

China is India's largest northern neighbour and one of the world's oldest civilizations. It is the second-largest economy. India and China share a long Himalayan frontier. Both the countries have maintained cultural contacts for over two thousand years through trade, Buddhism and scholarly exchanges. Today, the relationship includes cooperation in trade and global forums, alongside differences on certain boundary issues.

1.3.3.2 Location

The People's Republic of China was founded on October 1, 1949. China is situated in eastern Asia on the western shore of the Pacific Ocean, with an area of 95,96,960 sq km. Stretching 5,000 kilometres from east to west and 5,500 kilometres from north to south. The capital of China is Beijing. China's continental coastline extends for about 18,000 kilometres. It shares an international border over 3,488 kilometres long with Indian states like Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand. It is divided into 23 provinces, 5 autonomous regions, 4 municipalities under the direct jurisdiction of the Central Government, and 2 special administrative regions. The international boundary of India with China was drawn by British official Sir Henry McMahon in 1914. It is known as the McMahon Line

1.3.3.3 Historical Relations

India and China have maintained a relationship that spans over two thousand years.

India and China were connected through the Silk Road and maritime trade routes. Spread of Buddhism from India to China between the 1st and 7th centuries CE, created a major cultural and religious link. Chinese pilgrims such as Faxian (Fa-Hien) and Xuanzang (Hsuan Tsang) visited India to study Buddhism and documented Indian society, education, and culture. Chinese scholar **Xuanzang** studied at **Nalanda University** during the seventh century and wrote detailed accounts of Indian society, education and religion, which remain valuable historical sources. Indian scholars and monks also travelled to China, strengthening intellectual and religious ties. Relations between the two countries deteriorated due to border disputes, culminating in the **Sino-Indian War of 1962**, which significantly damaged bilateral ties. Border tensions have continued

periodically despite diplomatic efforts. At the same time, both countries cooperate in international forums such as **BRICS** and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), while engaging in dialogue to manage differences. The future of India–China relations will depend on continued diplomatic engagement, confidence-building measures, and efforts to balance competition with cooperation.

3.3.4 Major Rivers

1. Yangtze River (Chang Jiang) 2. Yellow River (Huang He) 3. Pearl River (Zhu Jiang) 4. Heilong (Amur) 5. River Mekong 6. River (Lancang Jiang in China) 7. Yarlung Tsangpo (Brahmaputra) 8. Salween River (Nu Jiang)

Major Mountain Ranges in China

1. Himalayas – Located along China's southwestern border; contains some of the world's highest peaks.
2. Kunlun Mountains – One of the longest mountain ranges in Asia, located north of the Tibetan Plateau.
3. Tianshan Mountains – Extends into western China and is a UNESCO World Heritage region.
4. Qinling Mountains – A major geographical divide between northern and southern China.
5. Altai Mountains – Located in northern China near the borders with Mongolia, Russia, and Kazakhstan.
6. Greater Khingan Range – Important for forests and biodiversity.
7. Hengduan Mountains – Known for rich biodiversity and deep valleys.
8. Nanling Mountains – A major mountain system in southern China.

Major Peaks in China

1. Mount Everest – 8,848.86 m; located on the China–Nepal border.
2. K2 – Located in the Karakoram range near China's border region.
3. Mount Gongga – 7,556 m.
4. Shishapangma – 8,027 m; the only 8,000+ metre peak entirely within China.

5. Mount Kailash – A famous peak in the Trans-Himalayan region.

China's major rivers support agriculture, transport, and settlements, while its mountain systems, especially influence climate, natural resources, and regional geography.

Learning Activity: 3

Compare Pakistan and China on some important geographical features such as:

- Direction from India
- Capital
- Approximate Border Length
- Shared Physical Feature
- Major Area of Cooperation
- Strategic Importance

1.3.4 Nepal

1.3.4.1 Introduction

Nepal is sandwiched between India and China. Officially, it is the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal. It is India's one of the closest northern neighbours situated in the Himalayan region. It is known for its spectacular Himalayan Mountain ranges, especially Mount Everest. Kathmandu is the capital of Nepal. The Himalayas form a natural bridge rather than a barrier, facilitating centuries of cultural, religious and economic interactions with Nepal. The two countries enjoy an open International Border, allowing citizens to travel and work in each other's countries without visas under long standing bilateral arrangements. India shares open and friendly relations with Nepal. This relationship is based on mutual trust, shared heritage, economic cooperation, people-to-people contacts and regional development.

1.3.4.2 Location

Nepal is situated North of India and South of China (Tibet Autonomous Region) sharing a border of 1770 kilometres with Nepal. It starts from Siliguri in West Bengal and ends at Surkhet in Nepal. It is bordering with the Indian States such as Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal and Sikkim. The lowlands are at sea level and the mountains of the Himalaya are the tallest in the world. Mount Everest, known locally as Sagarmatha, rises to 29,035 feet (8,850 meters) and is the world's highest

peak. Nepal's geography extends from the low land, just 75 meters above the sea level, to highest peak on earth. It contains eight of the world's ten highest peaks. It has an area of 147,516 sq.km.

1.3.4.3 Historical Relations

Based on centuries of shared culture, religion, traditions, and family ties, geography, trade people-to-people connections, India and Nepal share closest historical relationships in South Asia since ancient times. Both countries share cultural and religious traditions of Hinduism and Buddhism. Nepal is the birthplace of Gautama Buddha at Lumbini. The marriage relationship between Sita of Janakpur and Rama symbolizes the long-standing cultural bond between the two regions. After independence in 1947, relations became stronger by signing the India–Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship in 1950 to establish close cooperation, open borders and free movement of people. This enduring relationship continues to play an important role in regional peace and development.

1.3.4.4 Major Rivers and Mountains

Major Rivers

1.Kankai river 2. Koshi river 3.Bagmati river 4.Gandaki river 5.West Rapti river 6.Babai river 7.Karnali river 8. Mahakali river

Major Mountains of Nepal

1.Mount Everest – 8,848.86 m (world's highest peak) 2.Kanchenjunga – 8,586 m 3.Lhotse – 8,516 m 4.Makalu – 8,485 m 5.Cho Oyu – 8,188 m 6.Dhaulagiri I – 8,167 m 7.Manaslu – 8,163 m 8.Annapurna I – 8,091 m

The rivers are vital for Nepal's agriculture, hydropower, and water resources, while the Himalayan mountains are central to the country's geography, tourism, biodiversity, and mountaineering.

Learning Activity: 4

Prepare a list of five similarities between India and Nepal. Suggested headings:

- Religion
- Festivals
- Languages
- Food
- Tourism

1.3.5 Bhutan

1.3.5.1 Introduction

India and Bhutan enjoy one of the closest and most stable bilateral relationships in South Asia. Bhutan is a small Himalayan kingdom located between India and China. It is internationally recognised for its emphasis on Gross National Happiness (GNH), a development philosophy that places equal importance on economic progress, environmental conservation, cultural preservation and good governance.

1.3.5.2 Location

The Bhutanese name for Bhutan, Druk Yul, means "Land of the Thunder Dragon". Bhutan, landlocked country of South Asia, located on the eastern ridges of the Himalayas between two powerful neighbours, China and India. Bhutan lies North of West Bengal and Assam and South of China's Tibet Autonomous Region. Bhutan shares a border mainly along the eastern Himalayan region with Sikkim, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, and West Bengal. The country spreads over an area of 38,394 square kilometres. The International boundary of India with Bhutan is 699 kilometres long. The capital of Bhutan is Thimphu. Nepal and Bhutan are landlocked, which means that they do not have direct access to the sea.

1.3.5.3 Historical Relations

India and Bhutan enjoy a strong, friendly, and mutually beneficial relationship built on centuries of cultural ties and decades of diplomatic cooperation. India and Bhutan signed the Indo-Bhutan Treaty of Friendship in 1949. The treaty established peace, friendship, and cooperation. In 2007, the friendship treaty was revised. The updated treaty emphasized sovereign equality, mutual respect, and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. Many Bhutanese students pursue higher education in India. Cultural exchange programmes, scholarships, and tourism strengthen people-to-people relations. Their partnership is marked by trust, economic collaboration, security cooperation, and shared commitment to regional peace and development.

1.3.5.4 Major Rivers and Mountains

Major Rivers in Bhutan

1. Drangme Chhu – The longest river in Bhutan.
2. Wang Chhu – Flows through Thimphu before entering India.

3. Puna Tsang Chhu – Formed by the confluence of the Pho Chhu and Mo Chhu rivers.
4. Pho Chhu – One of the headwaters of the Puna Tsang Chhu.
5. Mo Chhu – Joins the Pho Chhu at Punakha.
6. Mangde Chhu – An important river used for hydropower.
7. Amo Chhu – Flows into India before reaching Bangladesh.
8. Kuri Chhu – A major tributary of the Drangme Chhu.

Major Mountain Ranges in Bhutan

1. Great Himalayas 2.Black Mountains (also called the Black Mountain Range) 3.Dongkya Range.

Major Peaks in Bhutan

1. Gangkhar Puensum – 7,570 m, the highest mountain in Bhutan and the world's highest unclimbed peak.
2. Jomolhari – 7,326 m, one of Bhutan's most famous peaks.
3. Jichu Drake – 6,989 m, located near Jomolhari.
4. Masang Kang – 7,194 m, among Bhutan's highest peaks.
5. Kula Kangri – 7,554 m (its exact location relative to the international boundary is subject to differing interpretations).

Rivers provide water for agriculture, drinking, and hydropower and mountains influence climate, support rich biodiversity, protect river catchments, and attract tourists and trekkers.

1.3.6 Bangladesh

1.3.6.1 Introduction

During the colonial period, Pakistan formed with territories. One on the North-east side of India and the other thousands of kilometres apart from the east of India. During the civil war of 1971, a new country called Bangladesh was formed officially known as People's Republic of Bangladesh. The geographical location makes it strategically significant for trade, transportation, regional connectivity, energy cooperation and cultural exchange. It provides access to India's North-Eastern states through improved connectivity.

1.3.6.2 Location

Bangladesh is India's eastern neighbours. Bangladesh surrounds much of India's North-Eastern Region. Bangladesh is bordered by the Indian

states of West Bengal to the west and north, Assam to the north, Meghalaya to the north and northeast, and Tripura and Mizoram to the east. To the southeast, it shares a boundary with Myanmar (Burma). The southern part of Bangladesh opens into the Bay of Bengal. Bangladesh stretches over an area of about 1,43,998 sq. km and has a coastline stretching 580 km. India shares a long international boundary of 4,096.7 kilometres long with Bangladesh. The international boundary of India with Bangladesh was drawn by the Radcliffe Line in 1947. Dhaka is its capital. The rich flora and fauna are very enchanting.

1.3.6.3 Historical Relations

In 1947, British India was partitioned into India and Pakistan. Present-day Bangladesh became East Pakistan, separated from West Pakistan by about 1,600 km of Indian territory. In 1971, the people of East Pakistan fought for independence. On 16 December 1971, Bangladesh became an independent nation with the support of India. In 2015, India and Bangladesh implemented the India–Bangladesh Land Boundary Agreement, resolving long-pending boundary issues.

1.3.6.4 Major Rivers and Mountains

Major Rivers of Bangladesh

1. Padma River – The main distributary of the Ganges in Bangladesh.
2. Jamuna River – The main channel of the Brahmaputra in Bangladesh.
3. Meghna River – Formed by the confluence of the Padma and Jamuna.
4. Brahmaputra River – Enters Bangladesh as the Jamuna.
5. Teesta River – An important river in northern Bangladesh.
6. Karnaphuli River – Flows through Chattogram.
7. Surma River – A major river in the Sylhet region.
8. Kushiya River – Another important river in the Sylhet region.
9. Atrai River – Supports agriculture in northwestern Bangladesh.

Major Mountain Ranges and Hills of Bangladesh

1. Chittagong Hill Tracts 2. Mowdok Range 3. Lushai Hills 4. Tripura Hills

Major Peaks in Bangladesh

1. Saka Haphong – Highest peak in Bangladesh (about 1,052 m).

2. Keokradong – One of the country's best-known peaks (about 986 m).

3. Tazing Dong – Another prominent peak in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

Rivers are the lifeline of Bangladesh, supporting agriculture, inland transport, fishing, irrigation and fertile floodplains. Hill regions are important for biodiversity, forests, tourism and the livelihoods of indigenous communities.

1.3.7 Myanmar (Burma)

1.3.7.1 Introduction

In 1989, the country was renamed Myanmar, replacing the old name Burma. Myanmar also serves as a gateway connecting India to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Myanmar is India's eastern neighbour. It is a geographical bridge between South Asia and Southeast Asia. It occupies a key position in India's Act East Policy, which strengthens political, economic and cultural relations with ASEAN. The Moreh–Tamu border point facilitates trade and cross-border cooperation. India and Myanmar also collaborate in defence and counter-insurgency operations.

1.3.7.2 Location

Myanmar shares a 1,643 km border with India, touching Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, and Mizoram. It acts as India's gateway to Southeast Asia under the "Act East Policy." Myanmar is located in Southeast Asia and shares borders with Bangladesh, China, Laos, and Thailand apart from India. It starts in northeast India and ends in the Chin Hills of northwest. It is shaped like a kite with a long tail that runs south along the Malay Peninsula. It is stretching over 6,76,578 square kilometres. It has 1643 km borderline. The border mainly follows natural features. The Naga Hills, Patkai Hill range and rivers form most of the boundary. The present capital of Burma is Naypyidaw. The Sundarbans, shared by India and Bangladesh, represent the world's largest mangrove forest and are an important ecological resource.

1.3.7.3 Historical Relations

From 1885 to 1937, Myanmar (then Burma) was administered as a province of British India. Myanmar was connected with India's freedom

struggle during the colonial period. Subhas Chandra Bose and the Indian National Army had links with Burma during the struggle against British rule. Indian communities in Myanmar have contributed to trade, education, and cultural exchange. India and Myanmar share centuries-old historical, cultural, and religious connections. Their relationship has been shaped by ancient trade, Buddhism, colonial history, and modern diplomatic cooperation. India and Myanmar have had close contacts since ancient times through trade and cultural exchanges. Buddhism is one of the strongest cultural links between India and Myanmar. Ancient Indian kingdoms maintained trade relations with Myanmar through the Bay of Bengal.

1.3.7.4 Major Rivers and Mountains

Major Rivers

1. Irrawaddy River – The longest and most important river in Myanmar. It flows through central Myanmar and empties into the Andaman Sea.
2. Chindwin River – The largest tributary of the Irrawaddy River, flowing through northwestern Myanmar.
3. Sittaung River – An important river flowing into the Gulf of Martaban.
4. Salween River – One of Asia's longest free-flowing rivers; flows through eastern Myanmar.
5. Mekong River – Forms part of Myanmar's eastern boundary with Laos.
6. Kaladan River – Flows through Myanmar's Chin State and connects with India's Mizoram region.
7. Thanlwin River – A major river system supporting eastern Myanmar.

Major Mountains and Mountain Ranges of Myanmar

1. Hkakabo Razi – The highest peak in Myanmar, about 5,881 m high, located in northern Myanmar.
2. Arakan Mountains – A major mountain range separating Myanmar from India and Bangladesh.
3. Chin Hills – Located in Chin State and connected with the Arakan ranges.
4. Kachin Hills – A mountainous area in northern Myanmar.

5. Shan Hills – A large plateau and mountain region in eastern Myanmar.
6. Tenasserim Hills – Extends along the Myanmar–Thailand border.

Major Peaks of Myanmar

1. Hkakabo Razi – **5,881 m**
2. Gamlang Razi – **About 5,870 m**
3. Mount Victoria – **About 3,053 m**
4. Mount Popa – **About 1,518 m**

Rivers support farming, fishing, inland transport, trade and hydropower generation. Mountains influence Myanmar's climate, protect forests, support biodiversity, and provide valuable natural resources.

Learning Activity: 5

Prepare a list of five areas where India and Bangladesh cooperate.

Suggested headings:

- Trade.
- Transport.
- Energy.
- Culture.
- Education

1.3.8 Afghanistan - India's Extended Neighbour

Islamic Republic of Afghanistan shares a 106 km border with India, though it currently lies in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK). Afghanistan is located in South Asia. Historically, India and Afghanistan had strong trade and cultural connections through the Silk Route. India has helped rebuild Afghanistan through infrastructure and education projects. The region is strategically vital for South Asian geopolitics. Kabul is its capital city. Afghanistan is located at the crossroads of South Asia, Central Asia, and West Asia. It shares borders with Pakistan, Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and China. Although India presently does not share a direct operational border with Afghanistan due to geopolitical changes, historical maps show close geographical proximity through the region of Jammu and Kashmir. The border mainly follows the crest of the Hindu Kush Mountains and the watershed between the Afghan and Chinese sides of the Kunar River valley. The country is spread across an area of 652,860 sq. km

India–Afghanistan Relations

India has consistently supported Afghanistan's development.

Major areas include:

Infrastructure

India helped construct:

- Roads
- Dams
- Parliament building
- Electricity projects

Education

Thousands of Afghan students receive scholarships in India.

Healthcare

Indian hospitals provide treatment to Afghan citizens.

Humanitarian Assistance

India supplies:

- Wheat
- Medicines
- Vaccines
- Disaster relief

1.3.9 Summary

India's neighbouring countries play a significant role in its security, economy, diplomacy and cultural exchanges. Pakistan, located to the north-west, shares deep historical and cultural ties with India and is linked through the Indus River system. China, India's northern neighbour, shares one of the world's longest high-altitude borders with India and has maintained centuries-old civilizational contacts through trade and Buddhism. Nepal and Bhutan are two important Himalayan neighbours of India. Both countries play an important role in preserving the Himalayan ecosystem, promoting regional stability and strengthening South Asian cooperation. Bangladesh and Myanmar are two strategically important eastern neighbours of India. Bangladesh shares India's longest international border and maintains close cooperation in trade, connectivity, river water management, energy and cultural exchanges. Myanmar serves as India's land bridge to Southeast Asia and occupies a central position in the Act

East Policy. Both countries also cooperate with India in environmental conservation, disaster management and regional security, contributing to peace and sustainable development in South and Southeast Asia.

1.3.10 Key Terms

1. **Act East Policy:** India's foreign policy initiative to strengthen engagement with Southeast Asia
2. **Blue Economy:** Sustainable use of ocean resources for economic development and environmental protection.
3. **Delta:** A landform created by the deposition of sediments at the mouth of a river.
4. **Extended Neighbourhood:** Countries beyond immediate borders that significantly influence India's strategic interests
5. **Gross National Happiness (GNH):** Bhutan's development philosophy that balances economic progress with social, cultural and environmental well-being.
6. **Himalayan Ecosystem:** The interconnected mountain environment that supports biodiversity, rivers and climate regulation.
7. **Indus Waters Treaty:** A 1960 agreement governing the sharing of the Indus River system between India and Pakistan.
8. **International Boundary:** The officially recognised border between two sovereign states.
9. **Landlocked Country:** A country without direct access to the sea.
10. **Open Border:** A border allowing relatively free movement of people under agreed arrangements.
11. **Riverine Country:** A country whose geography and economy are strongly influenced by rivers.
12. **Silk Route:** An ancient network of trade routes linking Asia with Europe.

1.3.11 Self Assessment Questions

1.3.11.1 Multiple Choice Questions

Choose the correct answer

1. Which Indian state does not share a border with Bangladesh?
a) Tripura b) Meghalaya c) Assam d) Odisha

2. The capital of Myanmar is:
a) Yangon b) Mandalay c) Nay Pyi Taw d) Bago
3. The Sundarbans are famous for:
a) Tea plantations b) Mangrove forests c) Desert vegetation
d) Coral reefs
4. Bangladesh shares India's:
a) Shortest international border b) Longest international border
c) Only maritime border d) Northernmost border
5. Which policy aims to strengthen India's relations with Southeast Asia?
a) Look West Policy b) Act East Policy c) Green India Policy
d) Make in India

(Answers: 1. d) Odisha; 2. c) Nay Pyi Taw; 3. b) Mangrove forests; 4. b) Longest international border; 5. b) Act East Policy)

1.3.11.2 Short Answer Questions

1. Name the countries that share land boundaries with India.
2. Which country shares the longest land boundary with India?
3. Name the two Himalayan countries that share land boundaries with India.
4. Which country is located to the east of India and shares a long international boundary with India?
5. Name the Indian States that share an international boundary with other countries.
6. Which Indian states and Union Territories share a boundary with China?
7. What is the significance of India's location in relation to its neighbouring countries?

1.3.11.3 Long Answer Questions

1. Discuss the neighbouring countries of India and their geographical locations in relation to India.
2. Explain the geographical and economic importance of India's relationship with other countries.

3. Discuss India's geographical relationship with Myanmar and its importance for connectivity with Southeast Asia.
4. Describe the Himalayan neighbouring countries of India and explain their geographical significance.
5. Explain the importance of India's neighbouring countries in promoting regional trade and transportation.
6. Explain how India's geographical location influences its political, economic, cultural, and strategic relations with neighbouring countries.
7. Describe the major physical features that form India's boundaries with its neighbouring countries.
8. Discuss the role of India's neighbouring countries in cross-border trade, cultural exchange, and regional connectivity.

1.3.11.4 Case Study: Act East Policy

The Act East Policy aims to:

- Improve connectivity.
- Increase trade.
- Promote tourism.
- Encourage cultural exchanges.
- Strengthen strategic cooperation.

Myanmar is central to the success of this policy because it links India with ASEAN countries.

Critically analyse the Act East Policy

1.3.12 Study Guide

After completing this unit, learners will be able to:

- Identify and locate India's neighbouring countries
- Explain their geographical features and historical connections with India
- Evaluate bilateral relations and regional cooperation
- Locate the neighbouring countries on a Political Map
- Appreciate the strategic, environmental, and economic significance of India's neighbourhood in promoting peace, security, and sustainable development in South Asia and the Indian Ocean Region.

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Lesson 1.4 – India's Neighbouring Countries – Maritime Neighbours

4.0 Learning Objectives

After studying this section, you will be able to:

- Describe the geographical features of Sri Lanka and the Maldives.
- Explain the significance of the Palk Strait and the Gulf of Mannar.
- Discuss the importance of India–Maldives relations.
- Appreciate India's role in promoting peace, stability and sustainable development in the Indian Ocean.

1.4.1 Introduction

Sri Lanka and the Maldives do not share land borders with India. They are India's maritime neighbours, separated from the Indian mainland by the Indian Ocean and its adjoining seas. Despite the absence of land boundaries, these two island nations have maintained close relations with India for centuries. Ancient trade, religious exchanges, cultural contacts and maritime commerce have linked India with Sri Lanka and the Maldives since antiquity. Today, these countries occupy a central place in India's maritime strategy because they lie close to major international shipping routes in the Indian Ocean.

1.4.2 Sri Lanka

1.4.2.1 Introduction

Sri Lanka is an island country located to the south of India in the Indian Ocean. It is separated from India by the Palk Strait and the Gulf of Mannar. The official name is 'The Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka'. India and Sri Lanka have shared cultural, religious and commercial relations for more than two thousand years. Buddhism, which originated in India, spread to Sri Lanka during the reign of Emperor Ashoka through his son Mahinda and daughter Sanghamitta.

Cooperation between them contributes to regional security, disaster management, environmental conservation, tourism, fisheries and the Blue Economy. The Sacred City of Anuradhapura and the Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic at Kandy are among Sri Lanka's most important UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

1.4.2.2 Location

Shaped like a teardrop, lying off the southern tip of India, the tropical island of Sri Lanka separated by Pak Strait. The island is surrounded by the Indian Ocean, Gulf of Mannar, the Palk Strait. Sri Lanka lies South of Tamil Nadu; East of the Arabian Sea and Surrounded by the Indian Ocean. Only about 30 kilometres separate India and Sri Lanka. Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte (Administrative Capital) and Colombo (Commercial Capital). Approximately 65,610 square kilometres.

The island of Sri Lanka measures about 255 miles (415 km.) from north to south, and about 135 miles (220 km.) from east to west, with a total land area of about 25,300 square miles (65,600 square km). It has more than 830 miles (1340 km.) of coastline.

1.4.2.3 Major Rivers and Mountains

Major Rivers of Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka has more than 100 rivers, most of which originate in the central highlands and flow towards the sea. The rivers are important for irrigation, hydroelectric power generation, drinking water, and agriculture.

- Mahaweli River
- Kelani River
- Kalu River
- Walawe River
- Gin River

Major Mountains of Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka's mountains are concentrated in the Central Highlands, which are recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site for their biodiversity.

- Pidurutalagala
- Kirigalpotta
- Totapola Kanda
- Adam's Peak (Sri Pada)
- Namunukula
- Knuckles Range

Learning Activity: 1

Locate the following on a map:

- Colombo.
- Palk Strait.
- Gulf of Mannar.
- Kanyakumari.
- Jaffna.

Write one geographical importance of each location.

1.4.3 Maldives**1.4.3.1 Introduction**

The Maldives is an island nation located south-west of India in the Indian Ocean. It consists of 26 natural atolls and more than 1,000 coral islands, of which around 200 are inhabited. Although small in area, the Maldives occupies an important strategic position along major sea lanes in the Indian Ocean. The Capital city of Maldives is Malé.

1.4.3.2 Location

The Maldives lies South-west of India, South-west of Sri Lanka and In the central Indian Ocean. The total area of Maldives is approximately 300 square kilometres (land area). The Maldives consists mainly of Coral islands, Lagoons, Atolls, Sandy beaches and Coral reefs. The Maldives is one of the world's lowest-lying countries, with an average elevation is only about 1.5 metres above sea level, making the country highly vulnerable to sea-level rise due to climate change.

1.4.3.3 Relations with India

India and the Maldives share close historical and cultural ties. India has assisted the Maldives in areas such as Disaster relief; Health care; Education; Infrastructure development and Maritime security. The Maldives occupies a strategic position in the Indian Ocean, making it important for regional security and trade. One of the major concerns facing the Maldives is climate change. Rising sea levels pose a serious threat to the country's low-lying islands. The government actively participates in international efforts to address climate change and environmental conservation.

1.4.3.4 Maritime Security in the Indian Ocean

India and the Maldives cooperate to ensure:

- Safe shipping.
- Protection of sea lanes.
- Prevention of piracy.
- Disaster response.
- Marine conservation.

This cooperation supports peace and stability in the Indian Ocean Region.

1.4.3.5 Blue Economy

The Blue Economy is particularly important for island nations like Sri Lanka and the Maldives.

Major activities include:

- Fisheries.
- Marine tourism.
- Coral reef conservation.
- Sustainable shipping.
- Ocean research.
- Renewable ocean energy.

India works with both countries to promote sustainable use of marine resources.

1.4.4 Indonesia

1.4.4.1 Introduction

Indonesia is a **democratic republic** with a presidential system of government. The **President** serves as both the Head of State and the Head of Government. The country is divided into several provinces for administrative purposes. Indonesia is the largest island nation in the world and a major economic and strategic power in Southeast Asia. India and Indonesia are maritime neighbours because the Andaman and Nicobar Islands are located close to Indonesia's Aceh Province. Indonesia is the world's largest archipelago.

1.4.4.2 Location

Indonesia lies between Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean. Neighbouring countries include Malaysia; Singapore; Papua New Guinea and Timor-

Leste. Indonesia covers an area of about **1.9 million square kilometres**, making it one of the largest countries in Asia. It consists of more than **17,000 islands**. Major islands include Sumatra; Java; Borneo; Sulawesi and Papua. Indonesia has numerous volcanoes because it lies on the Pacific Ring of Fire an area known for frequent earthquakes and volcanic activity. Indonesia has more than **120 active volcanoes**, including Mount **Merapi**, **Mount Bromo**, and **Krakatoa**. The fertile volcanic soils support extensive agriculture.

1.4.4.3 India–Indonesia Relations

India and Indonesia have enjoyed close historical, cultural, and economic ties for centuries. Areas of cooperation are: Trade and investment; Maritime security; Defence cooperation; Tourism; Cultural exchanges and ASEAN and Indo-Pacific cooperation. Ancient Indian culture significantly influenced Indonesia through the spread of **Hinduism** and **Buddhism**. Temples such as **Borobudur** and **Prambanan** reflect these historical connections. Ancient kingdoms adopted Sanskrit; Ramayana and Mahabharata. The famous Ramayana ballet in Indonesia reflects India's ancient cultural influence. The Malacca Strait is among the world's busiest shipping lanes. A large proportion of India's international trade passes through this route. Therefore, cooperation with Indonesia is strategically important.

1.4.4.4 India–Indonesia Cooperation in the Blue Economy

India and Indonesia cooperate in several areas related to the Blue Economy:

- Maritime security
- Sustainable fisheries
- Marine scientific research
- Disaster management
- Port development
- Coastal resource conservation
- Indo-Pacific maritime cooperation

Both countries recognize the importance of maintaining a free, open, inclusive, and sustainable Indo-Pacific.

Learning Activity: 2

Critically analyse the role of SAGAR in promoting regional cooperation, maritime safety and sustainable development.

1.4.5 Summary

Sri Lanka and the Maldives are India's important maritime neighbours in the Indian Ocean. Through initiatives such as SAGAR, India promotes regional cooperation, maritime safety and sustainable development. The Blue Economy, environmental conservation and climate resilience are increasingly important areas of partnership among these countries. Afghanistan serves as India's extended neighbour linking South Asia with Central Asia. Indonesia is India's important maritime neighbour located across the Andaman Sea and close to the strategically vital Malacca Strait. India and Indonesia maintain strong cultural, economic, defence, and maritime partnerships that contribute to stability in the Indo-Pacific region. Comparing India's neighbours helps in understanding the country's geopolitical environment and foreign policy priorities.

1. Archipelago: A group or chain of islands
2. Atoll: A ring-shaped coral island surrounding a lagoon.
3. Indo-Pacific: The interconnected maritime region stretching from the Indian Ocean to the Pacific Ocean
4. Maritime Neighbour: A country located nearby across a sea or ocean rather than sharing a land border.
5. Palk Strait: The narrow stretch of water separating India and Sri Lanka.
6. SAGAR: Security and Growth for All in the Region, India's vision for cooperation in the Indian Ocean.

1.4.7 Self Assessment Questions**1.4.7.1 Multiple Choice Questions**

Choose the correct answer

1. Sri Lanka lies to the _____ of India.
a) North b) South c) East d) West
2. The commercial capital of Sri Lanka is:
a) Kandy b) Colombo c) Galle d) Jaffna

3. The Maldives is famous for:
 - a) Desert landscapes b) Coral atolls c) Snow-covered mountains
 - d) Temperate forests
4. Which water body separates India and Sri Lanka?
 - a) Red Sea b) Palk Strait c) Strait of Malacca d) Persian Gulf
5. The main economic activity of the Maldives is:
 - a) Mining b) Heavy Industry c) Tourism
 - d) Automobile Manufacturing

(Answers: 1. b) South; 2. b) Colombo; 3. b) Coral atolls; 4. b) Palk Strait; 5. c) Tourism)

1.4.7.2 Short Answer Questions

1. What is meant by a maritime neighbour?
2. Which two countries are India's major maritime neighbours in the Indian Ocean?
3. Which water body separates India from Sri Lanka?
4. What is the Gulf of Mannar?
5. What is the geographical significance of the Palk Strait between India and Sri Lanka?
6. Why is the location of Sri Lanka and Maldives important in the Indian Ocean Region?

1.4.7.3 Long Answer Questions

1. Explain the geographical location of Sri Lanka in relation to India and discuss the importance of the Palk Strait and Gulf of Mannar.
2. Describe the geographical location of the Sri Lanka and Maldives and explain its importance as a maritime neighbour of India.
3. Discuss the role of Sri Lanka and Maldives in India's maritime security.
4. Explain how Sri Lanka and Maldives contribute to India's trade, transportation, and maritime connectivity.
5. Describe the cultural and historical links between India and Sri Lanka and explain their significance.
6. Discuss the importance of India's relations with the Maldives in promoting regional cooperation in the Indian Ocean.

7. Explain how India's geographical proximity to Sri Lanka and Maldives influences its foreign and maritime policies.

India has extended humanitarian assistance to Sri Lanka during periods of natural disasters and economic challenges. Assistance has included medical supplies, food, fuel support, disaster relief and development cooperation. Such initiatives strengthen mutual trust and regional solidarity.

Analyse

Why is humanitarian assistance an important part of foreign policy?

1.4.8 Study Guide

After completing this section, you should be able to:

- ✓ explain Afghanistan's strategic importance;
- ✓ identify Indonesia's maritime significance;
- ✓ understand India's regional diplomacy;
- ✓ compare neighbouring countries using geographical indicators;
- ✓ explain India's maritime security interests.

1.4.9 References

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Lesson 1.5 - Geographical Diversities of India

1.5.0 Learning Objectives

After studying this section, the learner will be able to:

- Explain the meaning of geographical diversity.
- Describe the major physical divisions of India.
- Describe the major mountain ranges of India.
- Explain the physical, climatic, ecological, and economic significance of India's mountains.
- Identify the important deserts of India on a map.
- Explain the geographical features of the Thar Desert and the Rann of Kutch.
- Identify the major perennial rivers of India on a map.
- Describe the geographical features of India's coastline.

1.5.1 Introduction

India is one of the world's most geographically diverse countries. Stretching from the snow-covered Himalayas in the north to the tropical seas in the south, and from the arid Thar Desert in the west to the dense forests of the northeast, India presents remarkable geographical variations which influence climate, agriculture, natural vegetation, wildlife, occupations, culture, settlement patterns, transportation, and economic development. Because of such enormous physical variation, India is often described as "a land of geographical diversities."

Understanding these diversities is essential for appreciating India's unity amidst diversity and for planning sustainable development.

1.5.2 Assessment of Prior Knowledge

Before beginning this lesson, answer the following questions.

1. What do you understand by the term "geography"?
2. Which is the highest mountain range in India?
3. Name two major rivers of India.
4. Which is the highest mountain range in India?
5. Name the highest peak located entirely in India.

6. Name one famous hill station located in the Western Ghats.
7. Which desert is located in north-western India?
8. Why do deserts receive very little rainfall?
9. What is a forest?
10. Name any two animals found in Indian forests.
11. Which state has the longest coastline in India?
12. Have you ever visited a beach or a coastal city? What activities did you observe there?

Write your answers in your notebook. Compare them with the information provided in this section after completing your reading.

1.5.3 Meaning of Geographical Diversity

Geographical diversity refers to the existence of different physical and natural features within a country or region. It refers to the degree to which physical separation occurs between the generation and utility of resources. India has geographical diversity with deserts, evergreen forests, steep mountains, plateaus, islands, soils, vegetation, mineral resources, perennial and non-perennial river systems, coastal plants and fertile plains. India possesses almost every major landform found on Earth, making it one of the most geographically diverse countries. Certain parts in India are so fertile that they are counted amongst the most fertile regions of the world, while other are so unproductive and barren that hardly anything can be grown there. The following discussion concentrates on the major factors of geographical diversity of India, viz.,

- Mountains
- Deserts
- Forests
- Rivers
- Coastlines and
- Plains

1.5.4 Mountains

1.5.4.1 Introduction

Mountains are among the most magnificent landforms on Earth. They influence climate, rainfall, biodiversity, river systems, agriculture, tourism, and human settlements. India possesses several important

mountain ranges that differ greatly in age, height, geological structure, and ecological significance. The significant mountain ranges are: - The Himalayas, Western Ghats, Eastern Ghats, Aravalli Range, Satpura Range, and Karakoram Range. These mountain systems support millions of people by providing water, fertile soils, forests, hydroelectric power, and tourism opportunities.

1.5.4.2 The Himalayas

The Himalayas are the highest and youngest mountain range in the world. They span across India, Nepal, Bhutan, China (Tibet), and Pakistan. In India, the Himalayas cover several states including Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, and Arunachal Pradesh. Mount Everest, Kanchenjunga, and Nanda Devi, are part of the Himalayas. The Himalayan range offers stunning landscapes, diverse flora and fauna, and is a significant source of water for the Indian subcontinent.

1.5.4.3 Western Ghats (Sahyadri Mountains)

It runs parallel to the western coast from Gujarat to Tamil Nadu. These mountains are older than the Himalayas. For its rich biodiversity, UNESCO recognized it as World Heritage Site. Several national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, and hill stations are located. Notable peak include Anamudi in Kerala, the highest peak in South India, and Doddabetta in Tamil Nadu.

1.5.4.4 Eastern Ghats

They are a discontinuous range of mountains along India's eastern coast. They run parallel to the Bay of Bengal, covering Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Tamil Nadu. They are known for their scenic beauty, waterfalls, and rich mineral deposits.

1.5.4.5 Aravalli Range

It is one of the oldest mountain ranges in India, covering around 800 kms. across Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana, and Delhi. Mount Abu, the only hill station in Rajasthan, is located in the southern part of the Aravalli Range.

1.5.4.6 Satpura Range

It is a series of hills and plateaus located primarily in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. The highest peak is Dhupgarh located Madhya Pradesh.

1.5.4.7 The Karakoram Range

This range is a part of the greater Himalayas and is known for its towering peaks, including K2 (Mount Godwin-Austen), which is the second highest peak in the world.

These are some of the prominent lofty mountain ranges in India, each not only contributing to the country's natural beauty, rich geographical diversity and cultural heritage but also serve as significant landmarks in mountaineering and adventure tourism, attracting climbers and trekkers from around the world.

1.5.5 Deserts

1.5.5.1 : A desert is any region that receives **very little rainfall**, making it difficult for dense vegetation to grow. Some deserts are extremely hot, while others remain cold throughout the year. A **desert** is a natural region that receives **less than 25 cm of annual rainfall**, resulting in arid conditions and sparse vegetation. Deserts may be **hot** or **cold**, but their defining feature is **low precipitation**, not temperature. Following are some Indian deserts for reference:

Thar Desert, Rajasthan; Rann of Kutch, Gujarat; Nubra Valley, Ladakh; Spiti Valley, Himachal Pradesh; Cholistan Desert, Punjab; Cold Desert, Himachal Pradesh; Great Rann of Cholistan, Rajasthan; Barmer, Rajasthan; Pali Sand Dunes, Rajasthan; Osian Desert, Rajasthan; Hunder Desert, Ladakh; Kalo Dungar, Gujarat; Sam Sand Dunes, Rajasthan; Bikaner Desert, Rajasthan and Desert National Park, Rajasthan. Though there are many number and types of deserts in India, the details of only two important deserts in India are provided for. They are:

1. The Thar Desert
2. The Rann of Kutch

1.5.5.2 Thar Desert of India (The Great Indian Desert or Sandy Thar Desert)

It constitutes a natural border between India and Pakistan. About 85% of the Desert is in India, and the remaining 15% is in Pakistan. About 10 percent of the Desert contains sand dunes, while the rest is formed of craggy rocks, dry salt-lake beds and grasslands. This region features extreme temperatures that range from freezing in the winter to soaring heat over 122 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer. It contains a number of

protected areas (Desert Natural Park, Tal Chhapar Sanctuary, Sundha Mata Conservation Reserve). The Lal Suhanra Biosphere Reserve and National Park in Pakistan's portion of the Thar desert is a UNESCO declared biosphere reserve. The desert has valuable reserves of minerals such as feldspar, phosphorite, gypsum and kaolin. Varieties of Plants found in Thar Desert are: Khejri; Acacia; Neem; Cactus and Desert grasses. The Thar Desert supports remarkable wildlife. For example, Chinkara (Indian Gazelle); Desert Fox; Blackbuck; Great Indian Bustard; Camel; Sand Grouse; Indian Wild Ass and Desert Monitor Lizard. Many desert animals remain inactive during the daytime and become active after sunset.

Learning Activity: 1

Create a poster titled "A Day in the Thar Desert", showing climate, vegetation, animals, and adaptations of people.

1.5.5.3 The Rann of Kutch (White Salt Desert of Kutch)

The Rann of Kutch is a unique salt marshland located in the westernmost part of Gujarat, India. One of the dustiest and hottest regions of India is the White Salt Desert of Kutch, also known as the White Rann or Great Rann of Kutch. This region lies in the State of Gujarat, on India's western border with the Sind Desert in Pakistan. During the dry season, it transforms into a mesmerising white desert covered with layers of white salt, giving it the appearance of a snow-covered landscape. Average summer temperatures can reach a high of 50 degrees Celsius, while in the winter the desert cools to below freezing. The desert is submerged under water during the monsoon season, which makes it a breeding ground for flamingos, the Indian wild ass, and several other exotic birds and wildlife.

Learning Activity: 2

Prepare a table comparing the Thar Desert and the Rann of Kutch under the following headings: Location; Type; Climate; Vegetation; Wildlife; Tourism and Economic activities

1.5.6 Forests

1.5.6.1 Introduction

Forests are valuable natural resources of India. They provide ecological stability, support biodiversity, regulate climate, conserve soil and water, and sustain millions of people through livelihoods and ecosystem services.

Evergreen forests are dense forests found in areas receiving **more than 200 cm of annual rainfall** and experiencing warm temperatures throughout the year. These forests remain green in every season because trees do not shed their leaves simultaneously. Tropical evergreen forests are mainly found in regions receiving heavy rainfall. Numerous species of trees are found in these forests. These forests are located on the eastern and western slopes of the Western Ghats. They are predominantly identified in Andaman and Nicobar Islands; Arunachal Pradesh; Assam; Karnataka; Kerala; Maharashtra; Meghalaya; Nagaland; Tamil Nadu; Tripura and West Bengal.

1.5.6.2 Flora of Evergreen Forests

Evergreen forests contain numerous valuable tree species. Important trees include: Ebony; Mahogany; Rosewood; Rubber; White Cedar; Jamun; Mango; Bamboo and Teak (in associated moist forests)

1.5.6.3 Fauna of Evergreen Forests

Evergreen forests support some of India's richest wildlife such as Asian Elephant; Bengal Tiger; One-horned Rhinoceros; Deer; Malabar Giant Squirrel; Indian Python; Sloth Bear; Hornbills and Bats. Many endangered species survive because of these forests.

1.5.7 Rivers

1.5.7.1 Introduction

Rivers are the **lifelines of the nation** because they provide water for drinking, agriculture, industries, hydroelectric power generation, inland navigation, fisheries, and biodiversity. Indian rivers are broadly classified into **perennial rivers** and **non-perennial (seasonal) rivers**. Perennial rivers flow throughout the year because they are fed by glaciers, rainfall, and underground springs, whereas non-perennial rivers depend mainly on seasonal rainfall and may dry up during the summer months.

India has numerous perennial rivers that navigate its vast and diverse landscape. These rivers not only provide sustenance but also have immense cultural and religious significance. Let's explore the following rivers:

1.5.7.2 Indus:

It originates in the Tibetan Plateau near Lake Mansarovar. It flows through China (where it is known as the Sênggê Zangbo or Lion River)

before entering India and then Pakistan. It passes through Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab. It empties into the Arabian Sea near the port city of Karachi. It flows for a total length of 3180 kms. The Indus River Basin is shared by India and Pakistan, and water disputes have been a source of tension between the two countries

1.5.7.3 Ganga (Ganges):

The Ganga, originates from the Gangotri Glacier in Uttarakhand. It flows through several states such as Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jarkhand and West Bengal and major cities, including Varanasi, Kanpur, Kolkata, and Patna and merges into the Bay of Bengal. It flows for a total length of 2525 kms. The mouth of River Ganga forms the world's largest delta, known as Sunderbans, and was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1997. These waters irrigate one-third of India's land and account for 25% of the nation's water resources. Her water provides over 2,400 MW of hydropower energy to light some of India's largest cities and towns, including the nation's capital, Delhi. Betwa, Chambal, Damodar, Gandak, Ghaghra, Gomti, Hindon, Kali, Khan, Kosi, Kshipra, Ramganga and Yamuna are tributaries. Several endangered and well known species such as Ganga River Dolphin, Ganga River Shark and Ganga River Turtle are found in the Ganga

1.5.7.4 Yamuna:

The Yamuna is one of the largest tributaries of the Ganges. Originating from the Yamunotri Glacier, the Yamuna joins the Ganga at Allahabad in Uttar Pradesh. It flows for a length of 1376 kms. It passes through Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Delhi before emptying in the Triveni Sangam in Prayagraj (Allahabad). It supports a diverse range of flora and fauna. It provides habitat for various aquatic species

1.5.7.5 Tapi:

It originates in the Betul district of Madhya Pradesh, near Multai. It flows through Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Gujarat before emptying into the Gulf of Khambhat (Arabian Sea) in Gujarat. It flows for a total length of 724 kms. The tributaries are Purna, Girna, Panzara, and Aner Rivers. It is home to diverse flora and fauna. It supports various ecosystems, including forests, wetlands, and grasslands, which are habitats for numerous species of plants, birds, mammals, and aquatic life.

1.5.7.6 Brahmaputra:

Originates from Bhagirath Glacier, Manasarovar in Himalayas.” It is a trans boundary river, flowing through across three countries, China (where it is known as the Yarlung Tsangpo), India, and Bangladesh. Flowing eastward through Tibet, enters India and traverses the Northeastern region before merging with the Bay of Bengal in Bangladesh. It flows for a total length of 2900 kms. It passes through Arunachal Pradesh and Assam before emptying in the Ganges

1.5.7.7 Narmada:

It originates in the Amarkantak plateau of the Maikal Hills in Madhya Pradesh. It flows westward through the states of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Gujarat before draining into the Arabian Sea. It flows for a total length of 1312 kms. It passes through Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Gujarat, covering forests, agricultural lands, and rocky terrain. The Sardar Sarovar Dam built on this river is one of the largest dams in the world.

1.5.7.8 Mahanadi:

It originates in the Eastern Ghats near the village of Sihawa in Raipur district of Chhattisgarh. It flows eastward through Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Jharkhand, and Maharashtra before emptying into the Bay of Bengal. It flows for a total length of 858 kms. The tributaries are Seonath, Jonk, Hasdeo, Mand, Ib, Ong, Tel, and Brahmani rivers. The Mahanadi River has been extensively dammed for hydroelectric power generation, irrigation, flood control, and water supply. Major dams include the Hirakud Dam in Odisha, one of the longest dams in the world, and the Mahanadi Barrage in Chhattisgarh

1.5.7.9 Sutlej:

The Sutlej River is one of the major rivers in South Asia, flowing through India, China, and Pakistan. It originates in the Tibetan Plateau in western China, near Lake Rakshastal and Lake Mansarovar. It flows north-westward through Tibet before entering the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh. Then flows south-westward through Punjab in India and enters Pakistan and merges with the Chenab River. It flows for a total length of 1,450 kms. The tributaries, including the Beas River, which joins it near Harike in Punjab. Several hydroelectric projects have been constructed for electricity generation.

1.5.7.10 Thamirabarani (only perennial river in South India):

The Thamirabarani River is a prominent river in Tamil Nadu. The river is known for its reddish appearance, attributed to the presence of minerals in its waters. It originates in the Agastyarkoodam peak of Pothigai Hills in Western Ghats near Papanasam in the Ambasamudram taluk of Tirunelveli district. It flows eastward through the districts of Tirunelveli and Thoothukudi before emptying into the Gulf of Mannar, part of the Indian Ocean. It flows for a total length of 128 kms. It is harnessed for hydroelectric power generation.

Learning Activity: 3

Prepare a presentation on one major river basin, explaining:

- Physical features
- Economic importance
- Environmental issues
- Conservation strategies

1.5.8 Coastlines:**1.5.8.1 Introduction**

India is a peninsular country, surrounded by water on three sides. India's coastline extends from Gujarat in the west to West Bengal in the east and borders the Arabian Sea, the Bay of Bengal, and the Indian Ocean. It has played a vital role in India's history, trade, culture, defence, fisheries, tourism, and economic development.

A coastline is the boundary where land meets the sea or ocean. It includes beaches, cliffs, estuaries, lagoons, deltas, mangroves, and coastal plains. India has nine coastal states (Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and West Bengal) and four coastal Union Territories (Puducherry, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu). The Indian coastline is broadly divided into Western Coast and Eastern Coast. Both differ significantly in their physical features, climate, river systems, and economic activities.

1.5.8.2 The Western Coast

The Western Coast stretches from Gujarat to Kanyakumari along the Arabian Sea. The length is approximately 1,500 km. It contains Gujarat Coast, Konkan Coast, Kanara (Karnataka) Coast, Malabar Coast.

1.5.8.2.1 Gujarat Coast:

Gujarat is on India's western coast by the Arabian Sea. It borders Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Pakistan. The coastline has almost doubled, from 1,214.70 km to 2,340.62 km. It is also a main gateway for trade with the Middle East and Europe. It is because new satellite data now includes more creeks and inlets, especially in Kutch. Gujarat still has the longest coastline in India.

1.5.8.2.2 Konkan Coast:

The Konkan coast is known for its rugged beauty, with rocky cliffs and sandy beaches. It is bordered by Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, Karnataka, and Goa. The official length of its coastline was updated from 652.6 km to 877.97 km.

1.5.8.2.3 Kanara (Karnataka) Coast:

This stretch, called the Kanara coast, is famous for its beaches and temple towns. It shares borders with Goa, Maharashtra, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala. The coastline has increased from 280 km to 343.3 km.

1.5.8.2.4 Malabar Coast:

Located mainly in Kerala. Extends from southern Karnataka through Kerala up to Kanyakumari. The Vembanad Lake is India's longest lake. Famous for its backwaters and lagoons such as Vembanad and Ashtamudi, separated from the sea by sand bars. Major ports and cities include Kochi, Kozhikode and Kollam; region is significant for tourism, fisheries and inland water transport.

1.5.8.3 The Eastern Coast

The Eastern Coast extends from the Ganga River delta West Bengal to Kanyakumari along the Bay of Bengal. It runs approximately 2,600 km. It covers the coastal regions of West Bengal, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu. Formed largely by alluvial deposits of major rivers such as Mahanadi, Godavari, Krishna and Kaveri. Experiences a tropical climate with hot summers and moderate winters. The divisions of the Eastern Coast are Northern Circars and Coromandel Coast which are briefed below:

1.5.8.3.1. Northern Circars:

The historical name for the coast from Mahanadi delta to around Krishna delta. Today covers parts of Utkal Plains and northern Andhra Plains. They lie along the Bay of Bengal and today form part of the state of Andhra Pradesh. Major ports such as Visakhapatnam contribute to trade and industry.

1.5.8.3.2. Coromandel Coast:

Traditional name for the south eastern coast from around Krishna delta to Kanyakumari. It extends mainly across the states of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. Largely coincides with Tamil Nadu Plains and southern part of Andhra coast. Stretches from Pulicat Lake in Andhra Pradesh to Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu. It has a tropical climate with hot and humid weather. Receives most of its rainfall from the Northeast Monsoon (October–December).

Learning Activity: 4

Select one coastal state and prepare a presentation on its coastline, ports, fishing, agriculture, tourism, and industries.

1.5.9 Islands of India**1.5.9.1 Introduction**

There are exactly two great and major island groups of India's physiography. About 1,300 islands are located in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea. There are numerous small and large islands, some of which are volcanic in origin and some of which are coral in origin among the Islands of Andaman and Nicobar. The two main island groups are the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and the Lakshadweep Islands.

1.5.9.2 The Andaman and Nicobar Islands

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands in India were formed by volcanic activity. They are made up of 572 islands and are located between 6°N-14°N and 92°E-94°E. The northern part is known as Andaman Island, while the southern part is known as Nicobar. Barren Island, located in the Nicobar Islands, is India's only active volcano. The Arabian Sea Island Group are Lakshadweep and Minicoy Islands are their names. They are located near the Malabar coast (280-480 km off the coast of Kerala), between 8°N and 12°N and 71°E and 74°E. They are entirely made of coral deposits. Minicoy is the largest of the 43 islands in India

1.5.9.3 Lakshadweep Islands

Lakshadweep is a union territory of India that was previously known as Laccadive, Minicoy, and Amindivi Islands (1956–73). It consists of at least 12 islands that are spread over an area of 30,000 square miles, which is also approximately 78,000 square kilometres of the Arabian Sea and India's southwest coast. Minicoy and the Amindivi group are the primary islands in the territory. The easternmost island is around 185 miles (300 kilometres) from the coast of Kerala. The population was 64,429 in 2011

Learning Activity: 5

Prepare report on the location, physical features, biodiversity, livelihoods, tourism, and strategic importance of an island.

1.5.9.4 Some Other Important Islands of India

1.5.9.4.1 Majuli Island:

It is located in the Indian state of Assam. It's a large river island in the Brahmaputra. It is recognized as the biggest island in the world.

1.5.9.4.2 Sriharikota Island:

It is located in the Nellore district of the state of Andhra Pradesh, between Pulicat Lake and the Bay of Bengal.

1.5.9.4.3 Abdul Kalam Island/Wheeler Island:

Off the coast of Odisha lies Abdul Kalam Island. It is India's most advanced missile testing facility. Long back, this island was named after an English Commandant Lieutenant Wheeler.

1.5.9.4.4 Pamban Island:

It is located in the Gulf of Mannar, between Sri Lanka and India. Rameswaram Island is another name for this Island of India. Because the majority of Pamban Island is covered in white sand, it is not suitable for cultivation.

1.5.9.4.5 Diu Island:

It is situated off the coast of Kathiawar. It is well-known for its historical fort and beautiful beaches

1.5.9.4.6 Sagar Island:

It is located in the Bay of Bengal's Ganga delta. It's a big island.

1.5.9.4.7 Halliday Island:

It is part of the Sundarbans region and is located in the state of West Bengal. It is situated on the Malta River. It is also designated as a wildlife refuge

1.5.9.4.8 Phumdis/Floating Islands:

These are found in the state of Manipur. It is located within the Keibul Lamjao National Park. It is well-known for its Eld's deer/Sangai

The islands of India help to maintain ecosystem functions: they protect against natural disasters, promote nutrient cycling, and soil and sand formation, and help to regulate climate and diseases. They contribute significantly to India's economy, tourism, biodiversity conservation, and national security.

Learning Activity: 6

Locate the following in the Map of India:

- Himalayas
- Karakoram
- Aravalli
- Satpura
- Kanchenjunga
- Nanda Devi

1.5.10 Summary

India is a vast country with amazing geographical diversity. Its vast extent results in considerable variations in physical features, climate, vegetation, soil, and human activities. This lesson explored the geographical features of The Himalayan mountain along the northern boundary and the extensive Northern Plains, formed mainly by the Indus, Ganga, and Brahmaputra river systems. An account of The Thar Desert in western India, the coastal plains along the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal and islands, including the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep is provided. A picture of India's evergreen forests is also given. The geographical diversity has influenced its environmental, economic, social and cultural diversity. Understanding such geographical variations is essential for appreciating the unique physical and human landscape of India.

1.5.11 Key Terms

- **Geographical Diversity** – The variety of physical features, climates, ecosystems, and landscapes found in different regions of a country.
- **Mountains** – High, elevated landforms that rise prominently above the surrounding areas, often with steep slopes.
- **Deserts** – Dry regions that receive very little rainfall and generally have sparse vegetation.
- **Forests** – Large areas covered mainly by trees and other natural vegetation that support diverse wildlife.
- **Rivers** – Natural streams of flowing water that generally move from higher land toward lakes, seas, or oceans.
- **Coastlines** – The boundaries where land meets the sea or ocean.
- **Islands** – Land areas completely surrounded by water.
- **Plains** – Broad areas of relatively flat or gently sloping land, often suitable for agriculture and settlement.
- **Plateaus** – Elevated areas of land with relatively flat or gently rolling surfaces, often surrounded by steep slopes.
- **Terrains** – The physical characteristics and surface features of a particular area of land.

1.5.12 Self Assessment Questions

1.5.12.1 Multiple Choice Questions

Choose the correct answer

1. Which mountain range forms the northern boundary of India?
 - a) Aravalli
 - b) Western Ghats
 - c) Himalayas
 - d) Vindhya
2. Which region is known as the Great Indian Desert?
 - a) Deccan Plateau
 - b) Thar Desert
 - c) Malwa Plateau
 - d) Chota Nagpur Plateau

3. Which of the following is one of the major river systems of India?
 - a) Nile
 - b) Amazon
 - c) Ganga
 - d) Yangtze
4. Which of the following is an island group of India?
 - a) Maldives
 - b) Andaman and Nicobar Islands
 - c) Sri Lanka
 - d) Indonesia
5. India's geographical diversity is mainly reflected in its:
 - a) Mountains and plains only
 - b) Rivers and forests only
 - c) Mountains, plains, plateaus, deserts, forests, rivers, coasts, and islands
 - d) Coastal regions only

(Answers: 1. c) Himalayas; 2. b) Thar Desert; 3. c) Ganga; 4. b) Andaman and Nicobar Islands; 5. c) Mountains, plains, plateaus, deserts, forests, rivers, coasts, and islands)

1.5.12.2 Short Answer Questions

1. What is the Thar Desert? Where is it located?
2. Name the major river systems of India.
3. What are the major types of forests found in India?
4. What is a coastline? Name the two major coastal regions of India.
5. Name the two major island groups of India.

1.5.12.3 Long Answer Questions

1. Describe the Himalayan Mountains and explain their geographical and economic importance to India.
2. Describe the Thar Desert and explain how people adapt to its geographical conditions.
3. Explain the major river systems of India and discuss their importance

for agriculture, settlement, and economic activities.

4. Describe the major forest regions of India and explain the relationship between climate, vegetation, and biodiversity.
5. Explain the geographical characteristics and economic importance of India's coastal plains.
6. Discuss the influence of India's geographical diversity on climate, agriculture, occupations, and settlement patterns.

1.5.12.4 Case Study

The Namami Gange Programme, launched by the Government of India in 2014, aims to rejuvenate the Ganga River.

Major Objectives

- Pollution control
- Sewage treatment
- Riverfront development
- Biodiversity conservation
- Public awareness

Analyse the above scheme and present a report

1.5.13 Study Guide

- India is geographically diverse because it contains mountains, plains, plateaus, deserts, forests, rivers, coastlines and islands within a single country.
- The Himalayas dominate the northern part of India and influence climate, rivers, vegetation and human activities.
- The Thar Desert lies in Rajasthan and is characterized by low rainfall, sandy terrain, and sparse vegetation.
- Major rivers such as the Ganga, Brahmaputra, Indus, Godavari, Krishna and Narmada support agriculture, settlements and economic activities.
- The coastlines along the Arabian Sea, Bay of Bengal and Indian Ocean, supporting fishing, ports, trade and tourism.
- The Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep add to India's geographical and ecological diversity.

1.5.14 References

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UNIT – II

Lesson 2.1- India's Freedom Struggle: An overview

2.1.0 Learning Objectives

After studying this unit, learners will be able to:

- Explain the causes and stages of India's Freedom Struggle.
- Describe the major freedom movements in the independence.
- Describe the contributions of major leaders in the independence movement.
- Appreciate the significance of non-violent resistance.

2.1.1 Introduction

India was ruled by the Mughals and Britishers for many years. The Indian Freedom Struggle is a journey of countless sacrifices, movements, and leaders, each contributing towards the cherished goal of independence that begins with the onset of British colonialism in the 17th century. The East India Company initially entered India as traders, gradually expanding their control until they established a full-fledged colonial administration. With the Battle of Plassey in 1757, the Company secured a decisive victory, marking the commencement of British dominance over Indian territories. The Indian Freedom struggle led to a large-scale campaign that resulted in the end of British rule in India. Freedom was demanded by the Nationalists and the Congress party. The struggle for independence united people from different regions, religions, castes, and languages under the common goal of achieving freedom from British rule.

India possesses a rich heritage of knowledge known as the Indian Knowledge System (IKS). It includes traditional wisdom in education, philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, architecture, literature, governance, agriculture, and environmental conservation. Understanding both India's freedom struggle and Indian Knowledge Systems helps students appreciate India's cultural identity, democratic values, and intellectual traditions.

2.1.2 Assessment of Prior Knowledge

Before starting this unit, answer the following questions.

1. Who is known as the Father of the Nation?
2. Name any two freedom fighters.
3. What do you know about Battle of Plassey (1757)
4. Name any two moderates of Independence Movement
5. Name any two extremists of Independence Movement

Write your response in 3 – 5 sentences.

2.1.3 India's Freedom Struggle – Timeline Chart

The British East India Company took control over Bengal immediately after the Battle of Plassey (1757) and gradually established political control over India. The Historians have distributed the timeline of Indian National Movement into three major Phases:

- Moderate Phase (1885 – 1905)
- Extremist Phase (1905 – 1919)
- Gandhian Era (1919 – 1947)

British dominance reached its pinnacle in the nineteenth century. The "Revolt of 1857" known as the "Mutiny of 1857" was a revolt by peasants and unemployed soldiers in response to the dissatisfaction and discontent of the local authorities. There onwards, the list of national movements in India was triggered and led to major Indian freedom movements. The List of National Movement in India from 1857 to 1947 is given below:

S. No	Year	Movement Event	Objective / Cause	Key Personalities
1	1857	Revolt of 1857	Revolt against Company rule; military & agrarian grievances	Rani Lakshmibai; Bahadur Shah Zafar; Nana Saheb; Tantia Tope; Mangal Pandey
2	1885	Formation of INC	Organised political platform for Indians	W. C. Bonnerjee
3	1905	Partition of Bengal	Divide and Rule; curb nationalism	Lord Curzon

4	1905	Swadeshi Movement	Boycott British goods; promote Atma-Shakti	Bal Gangadhar Tilak; Dadabhai Naoroji
5	1906	All India Muslim League Founded	Safeguard Muslim political interests	Aga Khan; Salimullah
6	1907	Surat Split	Conflict between Moderates & Extremists	Lal-Bal-Pal group
7	1909	Indian Councils Act (Minto-Morley Reforms)	Expand legislative councils	Lord Minto; John Morley
8	1913	Ghadar Party Movement	Armed revolt against British	Lala Har Dayal
9	1914	Komagata Maru Incident	Immigration discrimination protest	Gurdit Singh
10	1916-18	Home Rule Movement	Self-government within Empire	Annie Besant; Bal Gangadhar Tilak
11	1917	Champaran Satyagraha	Indigo farmers' grievances	Mahatma Gandhi
12	1918	Kheda Satyagraha	Tax relief during famine	Mahatma Gandhi
13	1919	Rowlatt Act	Detention without trial	Sir Sydney Rowlatt
14	1919	Jallianwala Bagh Massacre	Protest against Rowlatt Act	General Dyer
15	1920-22	Non-Cooperation Movement	Boycott British institutions	Mahatma Gandhi
16	1921	Moplah Rebellion	Agrarian & religious tensions	Variyamkunnath Haji
17	1927	Simon Commission	Review 1919 Act	Sir John Simon
18	1930-34	Civil Disobedience Movement	Protest salt tax; full Swaraj	Mahatma Gandhi; Sarojini Naidu
19	1931	Gandhi-Irwin Pact	Compromise between INC & British	Gandhi; Lord Irwin
20	1935	Government of India Act	Provincial autonomy	British Parliament
21	1940	August Offer	Promise of Dominion Status	Lord Linlithgow
22	1942	Cripps Mission	Secure Indian support in WWII	Stafford Cripps

Notes

23	1942	Quit India Movement	Immediate British withdrawal	Mahatma Gandhi
24	1945	Wavell Plan & Shimla Conference	Resolve political deadlock	Lord Wavell
25	1946	Cabinet Mission Plan	Transfer of power framework	Pethick-Lawrence; Cripps; A.V. Alexander
26	1947	Partition of India	Division on religious lines	Lord Mountbatten

British policies resulted in economic exploitation, social inequality, and political domination.

Major Causes for Indian Freedom Struggle

- Economic exploitation
- Heavy taxation
- Destruction of traditional industries
- Racial discrimination
- Political annexation
- Social unrest

2.1.4 Sepoy Mutiny (Revolt of 1857)

The seed for the Indian freedom struggle was sown in 1757. Between 1757 and 1857, number of revolts erupted in different parts of the country. These were primarily led by local chieftains, peasants, and tribal leaders who were directly affected by the harsh revenue policies and administrative practices imposed by the British. India's first war of independence or Sepoy Mutiny, began at Meerut on May 10, 1857, and slowly spread across Delhi, Agra, Kanpur and Lucknow.

2.1.4.1 Causes

Causes that sparked Sepoy Mutiny are as follows:

- Introduction of Enfield rifle cartridges
- Introduction of land revenue policies and heavy taxation
- Doctrine of Lapse
- Discrimination, low pay, and disrespect towards Indian soldiers
- Economic hardship

- Inefficient and Ineffective administration of the British East India Company.
- Rumours of British intentions to convert Sepoys to Christianity.

2.1.4.2 Outcomes or Impact

It marked a significant turning point in Indian history and played a crucial role in shaping the subsequent struggle for independence from British colonial rule

- End of East India Company rule
- British Crown assumed administration
- Beginning of nationalist consciousness
- Divide and Rule policy pursued
- Indian Civil Service Act of 1861 was passed
- Number of Indian troops decreased and British troops increased

2.1.4.3 Key Personalities

Nana Saheb, Tantia Tope, Rani Laxmi Bai, Bahadur Shah Zafar, and Mangal Pandey, Man Singh, and Kunwar Singh.

Learning Activity: 1

Timeline Exercise

Arrange the following events chronologically.

- Civil Disobedience Movement
- Quit India Movement
- Non-Cooperation Movement
- Revolt of 1857

2.1.5 Rise of Nationalism (1885)

After Sepoy Mutiny, there was a growing discontent among Indians regarding British colonial rule. It was increasingly felt the need for a unified platform to articulate Indian grievances and demand political reforms. As a result, the Indian National Congress (INC) was founded in on December 28, 1885, at Gokuldas Tejpal Sanskrit College in Bombay (now Mumbai). It was attended by 72 delegates from various parts of India. Initially, leaders demanded constitutional reforms. Later, leaders demanded complete independence.

2.1.5.1 Moderates

The early leadership of the Indian National Congress included prominent figures such as Allan Octavian Hume, a retired British civil servant and Dadabhai Naoroji, a prominent Parsi intellectual, the first Indian to serve as the Congress president adopted a moderate approach towards political reform, emphasizing dialogue with British authorities. Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Surendranath Banerjee are prominent among moderates.

2.1.5.2 Extremists

Over time, under the leadership of Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai, and Bipin Chandra Pal, the INC began to adopt more assertive and nationalist positions, demanding 'Swaraj' (self-rule) and complete independence from British rule. Leaders like Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel provided dynamic leadership during this period

Learning Activity: 2

Take one leader each from Moderates and Extremists leaders and trace out their contribution to India's freedom struggle.

2.1.6 Swadeshi Movement (1905)

The Swadeshi Movement was a turning point in India's struggle for freedom. The movement was characterized by efforts to promote indigenous goods and industries, boycott British products, and assert Indian self-reliance. The Swadeshi Movement was a consequence of Lord Curzon's announcement for the partition of Bengal in 1905. It was perceived as a 'divide and rule' strategy. The "Boycott" resolution was adopted at a conference held at the Calcutta Town Hall on August 7, 1905. Thus, the Swadeshi movement was established emphasizing the promotion and use of Indian-made goods over imported British products. Many Indians, inspired by the movement and people see that they could defeat the British if they united. Further, it sowed the seeds for future mass movements such as the Non-Cooperation Movement and the Civil Disobedience Movement led by Gandhi and others. Prominent leaders such as Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, Lala Lajpat Rai and Rabindranath Tagore played crucial roles.

2.1.7 Muslim League Founded (1906)

The All-India Muslim League was founded in 1906 in Dhaka, British India. To safeguard the political rights and interests of Muslims in the Indian subcontinent. The founding members, led by Aga Khan III and Nawab Salimullah Khan, sought to address concerns about the political representation and protection of Muslim minority rights. amidst the backdrop of growing Indian nationalism. Khwaja Salimullah, Syed Amir Ali, Syed Nabiullah, and Mustafa Chowdhury are the key personalities of this movement.

2.1.8 Surat Split (1907)

The Surat Split occurred in 1907 during the 22nd Indian National Congress session held in Surat, Gujarat. The split was over ideological and tactical differences regarding the methods to be employed in the struggle for Indian self-rule. It led to a significant division within the Congress party between the Extremists and the Moderates. The Extremists advocated for more assertive and radical approaches, while the Moderates preferred a more gradual and constitutionalist path.

2.1.9 Home Rule Movement (1916 – 1918)

Home Rule Movement was the response to the First World War and a powerful means to express opposition to British rule spanning from 1916 to 1918. It demanded self-rule and self-governance for India within the British Empire. It marked a significant chapter in India's quest independence in 1947. It was started by Bal Gangadhar Tilak at Belgaum in April 1916 and later by Annie Besant, an Irish-born theosophist, in Madras in September 1916. This movement resulted in the 1917 Montague Declaration, that there would be a greater representation of Indians in the administration, fostering the growth of institutions for self-governance and finally bringing about responsible governments in India. Thus, it was a pivotal moment in Indian history in the determination of the Indian people in their struggle against colonial rule.

2.1.10 Champaran Satyagraha (1917)

The Champaran Satyagraha was a civil disobedience movement led by Mahatma Gandhi in the Champaran district of Bihar, India, in 1917. Gandhi organised three protests in Champaran, Ahmedabad and Kheda during the years 1917 and 1918, before beginning the Rowlatt Satyagraha.

Champaran Agrarian Act 1918 was signed by the Governor General of India.

2.1.11 Kheda Satyagraha (1917)

The Kheda Satyagraha took place in the Kheda district of Gujarat, India. Mahatma Gandhi launched the Satyagraha movement in Kheda to protest against this unjust taxation policy. The British government eventually yielded to the pressure and agreed to suspend the tax collection until the drought conditions improved. The success of this movement demonstrated the effectiveness of nonviolent resistance as a tool for achieving political objectives.

2.1.12 Rowlatt Satyagraha (1919)

The Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act of 1919, passed by the British Indian government, was known as the Rowlatt Act. The Rowlatt Act was aimed at curbing revolutionary activities in India. The Rowlatt Satyagraha, also known as the Rowlatt Act protest. Gandhi saw the act as a betrayal of the British government's promises of democratic reforms made during World War I in exchange for Indian support. Mahatma Gandhi began a non-violent Satyagraha on April 6, 1919, to protest against the British government's unfair Rowlatt Act, which was called the Rowlatt Satyagraha. As a result of protest against the Act, the infamous Jallianwala Bagh massacre, which took place in Amritsar on 13th April 1919, which further fuelled anger and resentment among Indians towards British rule.

2.1.13 Non-Cooperation Movement (1920)

The Indian National Congress (INC), led by Mahatma Gandhi, began the Non-Cooperation Movement on September 5, 1920 as a response to the Jallianwala Bagh massacre (1919) and the Rowlatt Act, along with other grievances against British rule. Gandhi wanted people to adopt Swadeshi principles and work for the eradication of untouchability from society. The Indian National Congress called for Swarajya using only non-violent methods. Following the Chauri Chaura incident in February 1922, where during a fight between the police and protesters a violent crowd set fire to a police station, killing 22 policemen, Gandhiji decided to put an end to the movement.

2.1.14 Civil Disobedience Movement (1930)

Mahatma Gandhi led a non-violent Civil Disobedience Movement in colonial India known as the Salt March, also known as the Salt Satyagraha, the Dandi March, and the Dandi Satyagraha on March 12, 1930 from Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi, a seaside town in Gujarat, where they produced salt from seawater in violation of the law. It was a campaign against British imperialism. The movement aimed to challenge unjust British laws and policies through nonviolent resistance and mass non-cooperation. More than 60,000 individuals were detained as the movement swept across the nation, including Mahatma Gandhi. Congress Party had Poorna Swarajya or total independence on 26th January, 1930 and declared it as 'Poorna Swarajya Day'. The Gandhi-Irwin Pact stipulated that the civil disobedience campaign would be put an end to in exchange for allowing Indians to produce salt for household use. Gandhiji participated in the London Second Round Table Conference as a "equal." Sarojini Naidu, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, and Vallabhbhai Patel were active participants. Ultimately, it contributed to the weakening of British colonial authority in India and paved the way for eventual independence in 1947.

2.1.15 Quit India Movement (1942)

In 1942, the British government sent Sir Stafford Cripps to India with proposals for constitutional reforms and greater self-government in exchange for Indian co-operation in the war. Under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi started the Quit India Movement (also known as "August Kranti Movement") on August 8, 1942 at the Gowalia Tank Maidan in Mumbai, also called August Kranti Maidan started as a result of failure of Cripps Mission to meet Indian aspirations for full independence, as it fell short of committing to post-war independence. The resolution passed demanded an immediate end to British rule, formation of a provisional government, and civil disobedience against British rule. This campaign, known as the "Bharat Chhodo Andolan," compelled the British colonial authorities to consider leaving India. The movement's slogans were 'Quit India' or 'Bharat Chodo', and Gandhi urged people with the slogan 'Do or die'.

Despite heavy-handed suppression by the government, the people were unfazed and continued their struggle. New leaders like Ram Manohar Lohia, JP Narayan, Aruna Asaf Ali, and Usha Mehta emerged after the top Congress leaders were arrested. With the top leaders gone, younger

and more militant members took charge. Aruna Asaf Ali, who wasn't well-known before, led the Congress committee session on August 9 and raised the flag. As a result, British authorities started discussions about Indian independence more seriously.

Conclusion

The persistent efforts of various factions within the Indian freedom movement eventually bore fruit in 1947 when India gained independence. Finally, on August 15, 1947, India gained independence, with Jawaharlal Nehru becoming the first Prime Minister and Dr. Rajendra Prasad as the first President. The freedom struggle was a testament to India's unity and determination, inspiring generations to value liberty and democracy.

Learning Activity: 3

The Jallianwala Bagh Massacre

1. Where did the massacre take place?
2. When did it occur?
3. Who ordered the firing?
4. What was its impact on the Indian freedom movement?

2.1.16 Contribution of Important Freedom Fighters

Innumerable people from various racial and ethnic backgrounds came together as freedom fighters who have struggled and sacrificed their lives to abolish the Colonialism in India. The table given below highlights the some of the freedom fighters and their notable contributions towards the Indian freedom movement.

Name	Major Contribution
Mahatma Gandhi	Father of nation: Led the nonviolent resistance movement against British rule. Civil rights activist in South Africa, Champaran and Kheda Satyagraha, Non-violence, Civil disobedience, Quit India movement

Jawaharlal Nehru	First Prime Minister of India, Pre-eminent fighter, played a key role in the Indian independence movement
Vallabhbhai Patel	Iron Man of India, Actively participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement and Quit India Movement, played a key role in uniting India after independence
Bhagat Singh	Influential Revolutionary who fought against British rule through violent means
Subhas Chandra Bose	Was twice elected President of the Indian National Congress. The INA revealed Subhash Bose's greatness as a military leader and an organiser.
Bal Gangadhar Tilak	Indian nationalist leader who was known as the "Father of Indian Unrest"
Maulana Abul Kalam Azad	Advocated Hindu-Muslim unity and played a major role in the national movement.
Aruna Asaf Ali	Indian nationalist leader and freedom fighter
Annie Besant	British theosophist and Irish nationalist who campaigned for Indian independence, Starting the Home Rule Movement
Rani Laxmi Bai	Indian Rebellion of 1857
Mangal Pandey	His actions in 1857 helped spark the First War of Indian Independence

Bipin Chandra Pal	Promoted the Swadeshi Movement and was one of the famous Lal-Bal-Pal trio.
Pingali Venkayya	Designer of the flag on which our National Flag is based
Veerapandiya Kattabomman	Was an 18th-century Tamil chieftain. He refused to accept the sovereignty of the British East India Company and waged war against them. He was captured by the British and was hanged on 16th October 1799

Apart from these leaders, many other key personalities also made contributions through different approaches—nonviolent protest, armed resistance, political organization, social reform, and public mobilization—all of which paved way for India's independence.\

Learning Activity: 4

Select one freedom fighter and prepare a presentation consists of:

- Birth place
- Contributions
- Major achievements
- Inspirational message

2.1.17 Summary

We all have heard and read a lot about India's Freedom Struggle through books, movies, theatre, etc. It was all initiated in the late 1800s and lasted till 1947. The Indian Freedom Struggle was a long and determined effort to free India from British colonial rule. The struggle began in 1757, after the Battle of Plassey, which marked the start of British control over Indian territories. By 1858, the British Crown took direct control, and India became a part of the British Empire. The Indian National Congress (INC) was formed in 1885 to demand greater political rights. Leaders like Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, and Lala Lajpat Rai—known as the Lal-Bal-Pal trio—encouraged the Swadeshi Movement to promote Indian goods and boycott British products. Freedom fighters like Uddham Singh, Veer Savarkar, Tantia Tope, Bhagat Singh, Mahatma Gandhi, Bhagat

Singh, Rani Laxmi Bai, and many others had devoted their lives to the motherland.

Mahatma Gandhi introduced the concept of Satyagraha. He believed that passive resistance and civil disobedience were influential weapons to challenge the dominating Britishers. Acts like the Quit India Movement, Non-Cooperation Movement, and Civil Disobedience Movement have united millions of Indians in a non-violent Indian Freedom struggle.

Finally, after decades of sacrifices and persistent efforts, India achieved independence on August 15, 1947. Jawaharlal Nehru became the first Prime Minister, while Dr. Rajendra Prasad was chosen as the first President. However, independence came with the partition of India and Pakistan, causing immense suffering and displacement.

The freedom struggle was a testament to India's unity and determination, inspiring generations to value liberty and democracy.

2.1.18 Key Terms

- **Satyagraha:** Satyagraha is Gandhi's method of achieving justice through truth, non-violence, and peaceful resistance
- **Swadeshi:** Swadeshi means promoting and using goods made in one's own country instead of relying on foreign products
- **Ahimsa:** Ahimsa means practising non-violence and avoiding harm to any living being through thoughts, words, or actions
- **Civil Disobedience:** Civil Disobedience is the peaceful refusal to obey unjust laws as a form of protest
- **Quit India:** Quit India refers to the 1942 movement led by Mahatma Gandhi demanding that the British leave India

2.1.19 Self Assessment Questions

2.12.19.1 Multiple Choice Questions

Choose the correct answer

1. The Indian National Congress was founded in:
 - a) 1885 b) 1905 c) 1920 d) 1942
2. Who led the Dandi March?
 - a) Jawaharlal Nehru b) Mahatma Gandhi c) Subhas Chandra Bose d) Sardar Patel

3. Which Act gave India independence and led to the creation of India and Pakistan?
a) Government of India Act, 1935 b) Rowlatt Act, 1919
c) Indian Independence Act, 1947 d) Charter Act, 1813
4. The Swadeshi Movement was launched mainly in response to:
a) The Partition of Bengal b) The Rowlatt Act
c) The Salt Act d) The Simon Commission
5. The Jallianwala Bagh massacre took place in which year?
a) 1915 b) 1919 c) 1922 d) 1930

(Answers: 1. a) 1885; 2. b) Mahatma Gandhi; 3. c) Indian Independence Act, 1947; 4. a) The Partition of Bengal; 5. b) 1919)

2.1.19.2 Short Answer Questions

1. Explain the causes of India's freedom struggle.
2. Discuss the significance of the Swadeshi Movement.
3. Describe the role of Mahatma Gandhi.
4. Explain the importance of Indian Knowledge Systems.
5. Discuss the relevance of traditional knowledge in modern India.

2.1.19.3 Long Answer Questions

1. Describe the major phases of India's Freedom Struggle.
2. Explain the contributions of important freedom fighters.
3. Discuss the significance of Indian Knowledge Systems in nation-building.
4. Compare ancient Indian education with modern education.
5. Explain how Indian Knowledge Systems contribute to sustainable development.

2.1.19.4 Case Study

In response to the Partition of Bengal in the year 1905, the Swadeshi Movement started Indians boycott foreign goods and started using Indian-made products. The movement promoted self-reliance, indigenous industries and national consciousness.

Questions:

1. What event led to the Swadeshi Movement?
2. In which year did the Partition of Bengal take place?
3. What did Swadeshi encourage people to use?
4. What was one major aim of the movement?

2.1.20 Study Guide

- British rule led to economic, political and social exploitation.
- The Revolt of 1857 marked the beginning of organized resistance for freedom movement.
- The Indian National Congress led the national movement for freedom of India.
- Mahatma Gandhi transformed the freedom struggle through non-violence.
- The Swadeshi Movement was a turning point in India's struggle for freedom.
- Home Rule Movement was the response to the First World War and a powerful means to express opposition to British rule spanning from 1916 to 1918.
- The Champaran Satyagraha was a civil disobedience movement led by Mahatma Gandhi
- The Rowlatt Act was aimed at curbing revolutionary activities in India.
- The Indian National Congress (INC), led by Mahatma Gandhi, began the Non-Cooperation Movement on September 5, 1920 as a response to the Jallianwala Bagh massacre (1919) and the Rowlatt Act,
- Mahatma Gandhi led a non-violent Civil Disobedience Movement in colonial India known as the Salt March
- In 1942, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi started the Quit India Movement
- India became independent on 15 August 1947.

2.1.21 References

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Lesson 2.2 - Introduction To Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS)

2.2.1 Learning Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Define the concept of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS)
- Explain the scope of Indian Knowledge Systems
- Identify the major characteristics of Indian Knowledge traditions
- Recognise the importance of preserving India's knowledge heritage;

2.2.2 Introduction

India is one of the world's oldest living civilizations. Over thousands of years, it has developed a rich body of knowledge covering philosophy, science, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, agriculture, architecture, governance, linguistics, arts, literature and spirituality. This accumulated wisdom is collectively known as Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS). The Indian Knowledge System represents one of the world's most ancient and comprehensive traditions of intellectual inquiry deeply rooted in the cultural, spiritual, and philosophical heritage of India. "Indian Knowledge System" creates a vast intellectual heritage that has been systematically developed and transmitted across generations for over 5000 years. In this regard, Albert Einstein said "We owe a lot to the ancient Indians, teaching us how to count. Without which most modern scientific discoveries would have been impossible". This acknowledgment underscores the fundamental contributions of Indian knowledge system to the global intellectual development. The importance of "Indian Knowledge System" lies not only in its historical importance but also in its contemporary relevance for addressing modern challenges related to sustainability, health and human development. The "National Education Policy" (NEP) 2020 has recognized the critical importance of integrating IKS into the modern educational curricula, emphasizing its role in fostering multidisciplinary learning and cultural preservation. Many principles embedded in Indian Knowledge Systems offer valuable insights for addressing these contemporary issues. Thus, Indian Knowledge Systems are not merely historical records; they continue to inspire solutions for present and future generations.

2.2.3 Assessment of Prior Knowledge

Before beginning this unit, answer the following questions. These questions are not for evaluation but are intended to help you to connect your existing knowledge with the new concepts presented in this unit.

Tick (✓) the statements that you think are correct.

Statement	Yes	No
Yoga originated in India.	☐	☐
Ayurveda is one of India's traditional systems of medicine.	☐	☐
Indian mathematics contributed the concept of zero.	☐	☐
Knowledge exists only in written books.	☐	☐
Traditional knowledge has no relevance today.	☐	☐

Do not worry if you are unsure of some answers. By the end of this unit, you should be able to answer all of them confidently.

2.2.4 Meaning of Indian Knowledge Systems

Knowledge refers to the understanding, awareness, skills, values and experiences acquired through observation, learning, reasoning and practice. Knowledge is not confined to collecting information. Instead, knowledge is viewed as a means of self-development and social welfare. Knowledge liberates individuals from ignorance.

The Indian Knowledge System (IKS) is the systematic transmission of knowledge from one generation to next generation. Indian Knowledge Systems may be defined as the collective intellectual, scientific, philosophical, cultural and practical traditions that evolved in India over several millennia and continue to contribute to human knowledge and sustainable development. IKS is the collective body of knowledge, beliefs, practices, and traditions that have originated from and evolved within the Indian subcontinent. Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) refer to the diverse body of knowledge developed in the Indian subcontinent through centuries of observation, experimentation, philosophical inquiry, practical application and cultural traditions. IKS comprises of Jnan, Vignan, and Jeevan Darshan that have evolved out of experience, observation, experimentation, and rigorous analysis. IKS is based on the Vedic literature, the Upanishads, the Vedas, and the Upvedas.

Example: A farmer who understands seasonal rainfall through generations of observation possesses valuable knowledge, even if that knowledge is not formally written in textbooks. Modern meteorology and traditional agricultural wisdom can complement each other.

2.2.5 Objectives of Indian knowledge system

The main objective of learning Indian knowledge systems is to use our ancient knowledge systems to solve current and emerging problems in India and the world. such as Holistic health, Psychology, Neuroscience, Nature, Environment & Sustainable development. Thus, the objectives are listed below:

1. Preservation of Traditional Knowledge

To protect ancient Indian knowledge found in Vedas, Upanishads, Ayurveda, Yoga, astronomy, mathematics, arts, and literature.

2. Holistic Development of Individuals

To promote physical, mental, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

3. Value-Based Education

To develop ethical values such as truth, non-violence, compassion, self-discipline, and respect for nature.

4. Integration of Traditional and Modern Knowledge

To integrate ancient Indian wisdom with contemporary science and technology for sustainable development.

5. Sustainable Living

To encourage harmony between humans and nature .

6. National Identity and Global Contribution

To strengthen understanding of India's heritage such as Yoga and Ayurveda with the world.

2.2.6 Need for IKS:

The Indian Knowledge System is a framework that aims to use India's ancient knowledge systems to help solve current problems. It incorporates contemporary knowledge and global perspectives and emphasized a holistic approach to learning. IKS can be relevant today because it:

Encourages interdisciplinary study: IKS spans many domains, including

philosophy, science, politics and arts and can provide insights that can improve personal and professional life.

Promotes a holistic understanding: IKS promotes a more integrated and balanced perspective of life and the universe, unlike modern educational systems that can be fragmented.

Emphasized sustainability: many IKS principles emphasize harmony with nature and sustainability, which are important for addressing environmental challenges.

Preserves culture: IKS can help preserve and promote Indian languages, arts and culture.

Helps students develop skills: IKS can help students develop problem solving skills and rediscover themselves through hands-on learning and experimentation.

IKS can cover a wide range of topics, including mathematics, astronomy, philosophy, yoga, architecture, medicine, agriculture, engineering, linguistics and literature.

The IKS is a division of the Ministry of Education (MoE) of the Government of India that was established in October, 2020. The IKS is located at the AICTE headquarters in New Delhi. Its mission is to promote indigenous Indian systems of knowledge, including traditional knowledge, including traditional knowledge in the fields of arts, literature, agriculture, engineering and more.

The IKS also aims to preserve and spread this knowledge for further research and societal applications, such as addressing challenges in areas like psychology, neuroscience and sustainable development.

The IKS work with Ministry of Culture and partner institutions to promote IKS through the Dhara Conference series.

They also have brought together leading thinkers and practitioners to develop Vision 2047, which documents a roadmap for establishing Bharatiya Gnana Parampara.

2.2.6 Scope of Indian Knowledge Systems

The traditional Indian educational framework recognizes eighteen fundamental branches of knowledge, known as 'Ashtadasha Vidyasthana'.

These systems encompass both spiritual and practical domains, reflecting the holistic approach characteristic of Indian knowledge traditions.

The scope of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) is broad and interdisciplinary. It extends from ancient wisdom to modern applications, encompassing education, health, science, technology, culture, governance, ethics, and sustainable development. It aims to improve the quality of life while preserving India's rich intellectual and cultural heritage. It covers almost every aspect of human life as follows:

1. Education and Philosophy

- o Traditional systems of learning such as Gurukula tradition, Holistic learning, Character development, Experiential education, ethical values, logic, and philosophies.

2. Health and Medicine

- o Traditional healthcare practices such as Ayurveda, Yoga, Siddha, Unani and natural healing for physical and mental well-being.

3. Science and Technology

- o Contributions to mathematics such as number system, zero, decimal notation, algebra, geometry and trigonometry, astronomy such as planetary observations, calendars, eclipses, time measurement metallurgy, architecture, engineering, and environmental sciences.

4. Agriculture and Environmental Conservation

- o Sustainable organic farming methods, seed preservation, water conservation, mixed cropping, biodiversity protection, and ecological balance.

5. Arts, Literature, and Culture

- o Indian languages, literature, music, dance, theatre, painting, sculpture, and preservation of cultural heritage.

6. Governance and Economics

- o Principles of public administration, justice, economic policies, public policy, diplomacy and leadership based on ancient Indian texts.

7. Ethics and Human Values

- o Promotion of truth, non-violence, compassion, self-discipline, social responsibility, and harmony.

8. Spiritual and Psychological Development

- o Practices for self-realization, meditation, emotional balance, and mental peace.

9. Modern Applications

- o Integration of traditional knowledge with modern science, technology, healthcare, education, and sustainable development to address contemporary challenges.

10. Environmental Knowledge

- o Sacred groves, Biodiversity conservation, Rainwater harvesting and Sustainable resource management

2.2.7 Characteristics of Indian Knowledge Systems

Indian Knowledge Systems possess several unique characteristics.

1. Diverse

Indian Knowledge System is characterized by its scientific – rational, logical and diverse nature. It incorporates traditional values and spiritual ideologies. It emphasizes the importance of ancient texts like the Bhagavad Gita, Ramayana and Mahabharata.

2. Evolved

IKS is made up of Jnan, Vignan and Jeevan Darshan which have developed through observation, experimentation, experience and analysis.

3. Preserve and share

IKS preserve and share indigenous knowledge for practical application in society and further research. It plays a key role in spreading India's traditional knowledge and rich heritage across many areas, including arts and literature, architecture, engineering and technology, basic sciences, agriculture, economics and management.

4. Combines traditional and modern knowledge:

IKS aims to bridge the gap between modern knowledge and traditional wisdom to foster a deeper understanding of India's intellectual and cultural heritage.

5. Holistic

Knowledge integrates body, mind, society, nature and spirituality.

6. Experiential

Learning occurs through observation, practice and direct experience.

Example:

Learning Yoga requires practice rather than memorising theory.

7. Interdisciplinary

Different subjects are interconnected.

Example:

Ayurveda combines medicine, botany, nutrition, psychology and environmental science.

8. Ethical

Knowledge should promote social welfare and responsible living.

9. Sustainable

Natural resources should be used wisely without harming future generations.

10. Inclusive

Knowledge developed through scholars, artisans, farmers, physicians, craftsmen and local communities.

11. Dynamic

IKS evolved continuously by incorporating new ideas and experiences.

Learning Activity: 1

Prepare a table comparing any two knowledge systems that you observe in your locality.

Example:

Traditional Practice	Modern Practice	Similarities	Differences
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Possible areas: Farming, healthcare, architecture, food preservation, education and festivals.

Discuss your observations with your classmates or family members.

2.2.8 Summary

Indian Knowledge Systems is a framework that aims to use India's ancient knowledge systems to help solve current problems. This lesson explains the need, objectives, features and scope of IKS covering many domains such as philosophy, science, politics and arts. IKS promotes more integrated and balanced perspective of life and the universe.

2.2.9 Key Terms

- **Ayurveda:** Ayurveda is a traditional Indian system of healthcare that emphasizes balance, prevention, and holistic well-being.
- **Experiential Learning:** Experiential learning is learning through direct experience, practical activities, observation, and reflection.
- **Indigenous Knowledge:** Indigenous knowledge is the traditional knowledge, skills, practices, and wisdom developed and preserved by local communities over generations.
- **Holistic Learning:** Holistic learning develops the intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and ethical aspects of a learner.
- **Jeevan Darshan:** Jeevan Darshan means a philosophy or worldview that guides how a person understands and lives life.
- **Jnan (Jnana):** Jnan means knowledge or wisdom gained through learning, understanding, and self-realization.
- **Upanishads:** The Upanishads are ancient Indian philosophical texts that explore the nature of reality, the self, and ultimate knowledge.
- **Upvedas:** Upvedas are traditional branches of knowledge associated with the Vedas, covering areas such as medicine, warfare, music, and architecture.

- **Vedas:** The Vedas are ancient Indian sacred texts containing hymns, rituals, knowledge, and philosophical teachings.
- **Vignan (Vijnana):** Vignan means deeper or applied knowledge gained through observation, reasoning, and practical understanding.
- **Yoga:** Yoga is an ancient Indian discipline that integrates body, breath, mind, and meditation for physical and mental well-being.

2.2.10 Self Assessment Questions

2.2.10.1 Multiple Choice Questions

Choose the correct answer

1. Which ancient Indian texts are considered the oldest sacred texts?
A) Puranas B) Vedas C) Upanishads D) Ramayana
2. What is the meaning of “Jnana” in Indian philosophy?
A) Wealth B) Knowledge or wisdom C) Physical strength
D) Art
3. Which of the following is an important component of Indian Knowledge Systems?
A) Ayurveda B) Yoga C) Mathematics
D) All of the above
4. The Upanishads mainly deal with:
A) Military strategies B) Trade and commerce
C) Philosophy, self-knowledge, and the nature of reality
D) Agricultural techniques only
5. Which of the following best describes indigenous knowledge?
A) Knowledge imported from other countries
B) Knowledge developed and preserved by local communities over generations
C) Knowledge limited to modern technology
D) Knowledge found only in textbooks

(Answers: 1. B) Vedas; 2. B) Knowledge or wisdom; 3. D) All of the above; 4. C) Philosophy, self-knowledge, and the nature of reality; 5. B) Knowledge developed and preserved by local communities over generations)

2.2.10.2 Short Answer Questions

1. What do you understand by the term "knowledge"?
2. Define Indian Knowledge Systems in your own words.
3. Mention any four characteristics of Indian Knowledge Systems.
4. Explain why Indian Knowledge Systems are considered holistic.
5. Give two examples where traditional knowledge is still useful today.

2.2.10.3 Long Answer Questions

1. What is the Indian Knowledge System (IKS)? Explain its meaning, scope, and significance in the Indian context.
2. Discuss the major features and characteristics of the Indian Knowledge System. How does it differ from a purely modern or Western approach to knowledge?
3. Describe the role of the Vedas and Upanishads in the development of Indian knowledge and philosophical thought.
4. Discuss the contributions of Indian Knowledge Systems to major fields such as mathematics, astronomy, medicine, yoga, architecture, literature, and philosophy.
5. "Indian Knowledge System is a holistic approach to knowledge and life." Explain this statement with suitable examples.

2.2.10.4 Case Study

Traditional Water Harvesting in Rajasthan

Many villages in Rajasthan have used **Johads**, **Baoris**, and **Stepwells** for centuries to conserve rainwater. These traditional systems recharge groundwater, reduce water scarcity and improve agricultural productivity. Today, environmental scientists recognise these indigenous methods as examples of sustainable water resource management.

7.11 Study Guide

- Knowledge refers to the understanding, awareness, skills, values and experiences acquired through observation, learning, reasoning and practice.
- The Indian Knowledge System (IKS) is the systematic transmission of knowledge from one generation to next generation.

- The main objective of learning Indian knowledge systems is to use our ancient knowledge systems to solve current and emerging problems in India and the world.
- Indian Knowledge Systems possess several unique characteristics.
- Know the scope of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) is broad and interdisciplinary.

2.2.12 References

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Lesson 2.3 - Evolution Of Indian Knowledge Systems

2.3.0 Learning Objectives

After studying this section, you will be able to:

- Describe the historical development of Indian Knowledge Systems;
- Identify the different phases in the evolution of Indian knowledge traditions;
- Explain the continuity and adaptability of Indian Knowledge Systems across historical periods; and
- Appreciate the contributions of ancient educational institutions to the growth of knowledge.

2.3.1 Introduction

Over the years, people living in the Indian subcontinent developed knowledge through careful observation of nature, logical reasoning, experimentation, spiritual inquiry, and practical experience. Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) evolved continuously by adapting to changes in the social, cultural, economic, and political contexts. The evolution of IKS can be understood through different phases. Each phase contributed unique ideas preserving the essential values of life such as harmony, ethical conduct, and holistic learning. For the sake of simplicity, an attempt is made here to provide an overview of the key aspects of IKS through the following heads:

1. Historical development
2. Philosophical foundations
3. Scientific advancements
4. Literary and artistic expressions
5. Four Purusharthas and
6. Idea of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam

2.3.2 Historical Development

The genesis of IKS can be traced back to the ancient civilization of the Indian subcontinent under the following heads, viz., ancient roots, Vedic knowledge and spirituality.

2.3.2.1 Pre-Vedic and Indus Valley Civilization (c. 3300–1300 BCE)

Archaeological findings of the Indus Valley Civilization evidenced the existence of organized knowledge which indicate the advanced achievements such as town planning; drainage systems; water management; standardized weights and measures; metallurgy; trade and commerce; and craft production. Cities such as Harappa, Mohenjo-daro, Dholavira, and Lothal demonstrate remarkable engineering and urban planning skills.

The classical period (200 BCE - 1200 CE) witnessed the thriving Indian civilization under empires such as the Mauryas, Guptas, and Cholas. Significant advancements were witnessed in mathematics, astronomy, medicine, and literature. Aryabhata, Brahmagupta, Charaka, and Sushruta made seminal contributions which continue to influence modern knowledge systems.

Example

The sophisticated drainage system of Mohenjo-daro reflects principles of sanitation and public health that continue to influence modern urban planning.

2.3.2.2 Vedic Period (c. 1500–600 BCE)

The Vedic period formed the foundation of Indian philosophical and spiritual thought. It witnessed the composition of the four Vedas, viz., Rig Veda contains hymns about their mythology; Sama Veda consists mainly of hymns about religious rituals; Yajur Veda contains instructions for religious rituals; and Atharva Veda consists of spells against enemies, sorcerers, and diseases. During this period education was imparted through the Gurukula system; knowledge was preserved through oral transmission; philosophical discussions explored the nature of reality and human existence and the knowledge was regarded as sacred and connected with ethical living.

2.3.2.3 Epic and Classical Period (c. 600 BCE–1200 CE) (Spiritual Era)

Various spiritual traditions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism shaped the cultural landscape of India through unique philosophical and spiritual teachings. The Upanishads investigate into concepts like Atman (self), Maya (illusion), and Karma (action), laying the groundwork for diverse philosophical schools in India. There are two Itihasas, Ramayana and Mahabharata. They lay down foundations for diverse philosophical schools in India.

Bhagavad Gita: Bhagavad Gita, part of Mahabharata, is a conversation between Prince Arjuna and the god Krishna addresses moral dilemmas, duty (dharma), and the paths to spiritual realization. **Ramayana:** Ramayana narrating the life and adventures of Prince Rama, his wife Sita, and his loyal companion Hanuman. **Mahabharata:** It narrates the story of the Kurukshetra War and incorporates diverse teachings on morality, politics, and philosophy. **Arthashastra:** the **Arthashastra**, written by Chanakya (Kautilya), provides insights into governance, diplomacy, and military strategy. **Guru-Shishya Parampara:** A system of education where knowledge is transmitted from a guru (teacher) to a shishya (student) through personal interaction.

2.3.2.4 Medieval Period (600 CE to 1707 CE or in some classifications, to 1757 CE).

During this period, knowledge continued to flourish through regional languages, literature, temple architecture, music, medicine, astronomy, and agriculture. Interaction with Persian and Arabic traditions led to exchange of ideas in mathematics, medicine, astronomy, literature, and architecture.

2.3.2.5 Colonial Period (1757 to 1947)

Western education became dominant during colonial regime. Many indigenous educational institutions declined. But, Sanskrit learning continued, regional knowledge traditions survived, Ayurveda and indigenous medicine remained active, scholars preserved manuscripts. Reinterpreting ancient knowledge in the light of modern science was made.

2.3.2.6 Contemporary Period (After 1947)

After Independence, renewed interest has emerged in Indian Knowledge Systems on account of sustainable development, holistic education, environmental conservation, preventive healthcare, cultural preservation, interdisciplinary research and multidisciplinary approach. The National Education Policy (2020) encourages integrating Indian Knowledge Systems into modern higher education system.

Learning Activity: 1

Prepare a timeline showing major stages in the development of Indian Knowledge Systems.

2.3.3 Philosophical Foundations

IKS offers unique perspectives on the nature of reality, self, and existence. A wide array of philosophical schools of thought, known as Darshanās delve into various aspects. There are six orthodox schools of philosophy as follows:

8.3.1 Nyaya

Nyāya means rule, method, or judgment. Sage Gautama (also called Aksapada Gautama) was the founder. It is primarily concerned with epistemology - the study of how we know what we know. It identifies four valid means of acquiring knowledge, known as pramāṇas: pratyakṣa (direct perception), anumāna (inference), upamāna (comparison and analogy), and śabda (reliable testimony).

2.3.3.2 Vaisheshika

Kanada (also called Uluka) was the founder of Vaisheshika. According to the Vaisheshika school, the laws of Karma guide this universe. It is a system of atomistic metaphysics that classifies the fundamental building blocks of the universe into nine categories (padarthas). All knowledge must necessarily point to an object of knowledge, which is referred to as a Padartha. The nine fundamental (padarthas) substances recognized in Vaiśeṣika are: Pṛthivī (Earth); Āpas (Water); Tejas (Fire); Vāyu (Air); Ākāśa (Ether/Space); Kāla (Time); Dik (Direction/Space as orientation); Ātman (Self/Soul) and Manas (Mind). It explores the nature of substance, quality, action, and universals, contributing to the development of atomic theory in Indian science.

2.3.3.3 Samkhya

Samkhya, attributed to sage Kapila, is a dualistic system that postulates the existence of two eternal principles: Purusha (consciousness) and Prakṛiti (matter) enumerating twenty-five tattvas (fundamental principles) that explain the evolution of the universe from undifferentiated nature to the manifest world of experience. The systematic enumeration of twenty-five tattvas is the hallmark of Sāṅkhya. The first two are the eternal, unproduced realities: 1. **Puruṣa** — consciousness (neither producer nor product); 2. **Prakṛti** (pradhāna) — primordial nature (the ultimate producer, itself unproduced). From Prakṛti, the following evolutes (vikāra) emerge in sequence: 3. **Mahat (or Buddhi)** — the Great Principle, cosmic intellect, the capacity for discernment and determination; 4. **Ahaṅkāra** — ego-principle, the sense of individual identity (“I-maker”). From Ahaṅkāra,

evolution branches in three directions according to the predominance of each guṇa: **Sāttvika branch** (from Ahaṅkāra influenced by Sattva); **5-9. Five Jñānendriyas** (sense capacities) — hearing, touch, sight, taste, smell **10-14. Five Karmendriyas** (action capacities) — speech, grasping, locomotion, excretion, reproduction **15. Manas** — the coordinating mind **Tāmasika branch** (from Ahaṅkāra influenced by Tamas): **16-20. Five Tanmātras** (subtle elements) — sound, touch, form, taste, odour **21-25. Five Mahābhūtas** (gross elements) — ether (ākāśa), air (vāyu), fire (tejas), water (āpas), earth (pṛthivī). It offers a comprehensive framework for understanding the dynamics of creation, evolution, and liberation (Moksha).

2.3.3.4 Yoga

Sage Patanjali expounded Yoga Sutras, a practical and spiritual discipline aimed at achieving union (Yoga) with the divine. It comprises eight limbs (Ashtanga) including ethical precepts (Yamas and Niyamas), physical postures (Asanas), breath control (Pranayama), and meditation (Dhyana), leading to self-realization and liberation.

a. Mimamsa: It is founded by Sage Jaimini. It is a system of ritualistic interpretation of the Vedas. The aim of Mimamsa is to give rules for the interpretation of the Vedas, the earliest scriptures of Hinduism, and to provide a philosophical justification for the observance of Vedic ritual. It emphasizes the importance of proper performance of rituals (Karma) prescribed in the scriptures for attaining worldly goals (Dharma) and spiritual merit (Punya).

b. Vedanta: Vedanta, also known as Uttara Mimamsa, is a non-dualistic philosophy that interprets the Upanishadic teachings to reveal the ultimate reality (Brahman) as the substratum of the universe. It asserts the identity of the individual self (Atman) with the universal consciousness (Brahman) and advocates self-inquiry (Atma Vichara) and devotion (Bhakti) as paths to liberation.

c. Jain Philosophy: Jainism, founded by Lord Mahavira, has its own philosophical system. It emphasizes non-violence (ahimsa), truth (satya), non-attachment (aparigraha), and asceticism. Jain philosophy includes concepts like anekantavada (multiplicity of perspectives) and syadvada (doctrine of conditioned predication).

d. Buddhist Philosophy: Buddhism, founded by Siddhartha Gautama (Buddha), encompasses various philosophical schools,

including Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana. Key concepts include the Four Noble Truths, the Eightfold Path, and the nature of impermanence (anicca).

Learning Activity: 2

Match the following:

You consider evidence and arguments from both sides before deciding who is right	Samkhya
You recognize that different ingredients have different properties such as taste, colour, texture, and smell	Yoga
You recognize that your body and mind are changing while developing awareness of the observer within	Nyaya
Students use breathing exercises and meditation to remain calm and focused	Mimamsa
Helping parents and caring for family members reflects responsibility toward others	Vedanta
Recognizing a deeper unity among people can encourage respect, empathy, and kindness toward others	Vaisheshika

Answers: 1-3; 2-6; 3-1; 4-2; 5-4; 6-5

2.3.4 Scientific Advancements

Indian civilization has a rich legacy of scientific achievements that have contributed significantly to the advancement of human knowledge. It is discussed under the following heads:

2.3.4.1 Mathematics:

India's contributions to mathematics include the decimal system, concept of zero, arithmetic, algebra, geometry, and trigonometry. Aryabhata's *Aryabhatiya* and Brahmagupta's *Brahmasphutasiddhanta* are classic works that laid the foundations of mathematical knowledge in India.

2.3.4.2 Astronomy:

Indian astronomers developed sophisticated astronomical instruments leading to the creation of precise calendars and observatories. The Siddhantic astronomy tradition produced renowned texts such as the *Surya Siddhanta* and *Aryabhatiya*, which provided accurate measurements of astronomical parameters.

2.3.4.3 Medicine:

Ayurveda is an ancient Indian system of medicine emphasizes holistic health and well-being through focusing on balancing of the three doshas - Vata, Pitta, and Kapha. Proper balance among these three Doshas is essential for good health. Ayurvedic texts such as the Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita contain detailed descriptions of anatomy, physiology, pathology, diagnosis, and treatment methods using herbs, minerals, diet, and lifestyle modifications to promote physical, mental, and spiritual health. Panchakarma is a detoxification and rejuvenation therapy in Ayurveda.

2.3.4.4 Yoga and Meditation:

It is a practice that aims to achieve harmony between the mind, body, and spirit, promoting overall well-being. Various forms of yoga, such as Hatha, Raja, Bhakti, Jnana, and Karma yoga, cater to different aspects of human nature. The systematic practice of yoga asanas, pranayama, and meditation has been shown to improve physical health, mental well-being, and spiritual growth, leading to a holistic approach to wellness. Meditation, in various forms, is a key component of yoga and serves as a tool for self-realization and inner peace.

2.3.5 Literary and artistic expressions

Indian literature and arts have played a vital role in preserving and disseminating knowledge throughout history. The following are the sub divisions of literary and artistic expressions.

2.3.5.1 Literature and Languages:

India's literary heritage is extensive, with classical works in Sanskrit, Pali, Prakrit and other languages. The vast literary corpus includes religious scriptures, epics, poetry, plays, and philosophical treatises.

2.3.5.2 Indian Arts:

Indian classical dance forms like Bharatanatyam, Kathak, Odissi, Manipuri and others are known for their intricate footwork, gestures, and expressive storytelling. These dance forms blend grace, beauty, and spirituality. Indian classical music has a profound impact on the emotions and spirituality. Carnatic music and Hindustani music are two major classical music traditions characterized by intricate melodies (ragas), rhythmic patterns (talas), and emotive expressions (bhavas). Visual Arts

is characterized by intricate paintings, sculptures has influenced artistic traditions in neighboring regions.

Indian architecture and town planning also reflect a deep understanding of environmental principles and aesthetic sensibilities.

2.3.6 Purusharthas of Indian Knowledge System:

The term **Purusharthas** refers to “the aims of human life”. These principles are **Dharma**, **Artha**, **Kama**, and **Moksha**. They represent a holistic approach to living, ensuring that a person pursues **moral integrity**, **material stability**, **personal joy** and ultimately **spiritual liberation**. **Dharma** (righteousness and moral duty), **Artha** (material prosperity and wealth), **Kama** (desire and pleasure) and **Moksha** (spiritual liberation and freedom). Each Purushartha serves a unique purpose and neglecting one can lead to an unfulfilling or imbalanced existence. For example, chasing **Artha** (wealth) without **Dharma** (ethics) can corrupt your soul, while pursuing **Kama** (pleasure) without considering **Artha** (sustainability) may leave you financially drained. The goal is to **harmonize all four** for a life of purpose, joy, and inner peace.

Learning Activity: 3

Following are examples of Purushartha. Identify to which category of Purushartha they belong:

- Exploring new places and experiencing different cultures can bring pleasure and personal enrichment
- A family prepares a budget to manage income, expenses, and savings responsibly.
- A person regularly reflects on their values, actions, and purpose in life
- A person helps an elderly neighbour without expecting anything in return.

2.3.7 Summary

This lesson explored the evolution of IKS can be understood through different phases, viz., ancient roots, Vedic knowledge and spirituality. IKS offers unique perspectives on the nature of reality, self, and existence. Six orthodox schools of philosophy are explained. Legacy of scientific achievements is discussed under the heads such as Astronomy, Mathematics,

Medicine, Yoga and Meditation. Indian literature and arts have played a vital role in preserving and disseminating knowledge throughout history. The sub divisions of literary and artistic expressions such as Literature and Languages. Indian Arts, Indian architecture and town planning, etc are being discussed. The principles of Purusharthas of Indian Knowledge System is explained.

This exploration brings a deeper appreciation for its enduring legacy and contemporary relevance in the modern world. IKS offer valuable insights and solutions to many contemporary challenges. The National Education Policy (2020) encourages integrating Indian Knowledge Systems into modern higher education system.

2.3.8 Key Terms

- Itihasas: Itihasas are traditional Indian historical or epic narratives that convey stories, values, ethics, and teachings.
- Mahabharata: The Mahabharata is a major Indian epic describing the conflict between the Pandavas and Kauravas and exploring duty, morality, and righteousness.
- Nyaya: Nyaya is an Indian philosophical school that emphasizes logic, reasoning, and valid methods of gaining knowledge.
- Purusharthas: Purusharthas are the four aims of human life in Indian philosophy—Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha.
- Ramayana: The Ramayana is an ancient Indian epic that narrates the life, ideals, and journey of Lord Rama.
- Samkhya: Samkhya is an Indian philosophical system that explains reality through the distinction between consciousness (Purusha) and matter or nature (Prakriti).
- Vaisheshika: Vaisheshika is an Indian philosophical school that explains reality through the classification of substances, qualities, actions, and other categories.
- Vedas: The Vedas are ancient Indian sacred texts containing hymns, rituals, philosophical ideas, and spiritual knowledge.
- Yoga: Yoga is an Indian philosophical and practical discipline aimed at achieving physical, mental, and spiritual well-being through practices such as meditation and self-discipline.

2.3.9 Self Assessment Questions

2.3.9.1 Multiple Choice Questions

Choose the correct answer

1. Which Purushartha represents material prosperity and wealth?
A. Dharma B. Artha C. Kama D. Moksha
2. The Indian government's IKS Division is under which ministry?
A. Ministry of Culture B. Ministry of Education
C. Ministry of Home Affairs D. Ministry of Information
3. What does Moksha represent in modern psychological terms?
A. Material success B. Social recognition
C. Self-realization and inner peace D. Physical health
4. According to traditional texts, what percentage of earnings should be dedicated to charity?
A. 5% B. 10% C. 15% D. 20%
5. Which Purushartha was historically misunderstood and suppressed due to colonial interpretations?
A. Dharma B. Artha C. Kama D. Moksha

(**Answers:** 1. B. Artha; 2. B. Ministry of Education; 3. C. Self realization and inner peace; 4. B.10%; 5. C.Karma)

2.3.9.2 Answer the following questions

1. List out various historical phases in the evolution of Indian Knowledge Systems.
2. What are the four Vedas?
3. Name six Vedangas.
4. Explain the importance of the Upanishads.
5. Mention any four schools of Indian philosophy.
6. What are the Four Purusharthas in Hinduism?
7. Is the concept of Purusharthas still relevant in 2026?
8. How does Dharma differ from religion?
9. What is the relationship between Kama and Moksha?

2.3.9.3 Case Study Guide

Ancient and medieval Indian scholars made significant contributions to mathematics and astronomy, including the development of the decimal place-value system and important work on zero, arithmetic, algebra, and astronomical calculations. Scholars such as Aryabhata and Brahmagupta contributed to mathematical and astronomical knowledge that influenced later developments in other parts of the world.

Questions:

1. What is the significance of the decimal place-value system?
2. Who was Aryabhata?
3. What were some of Brahmagupta's contributions to mathematics?
4. How did Indian mathematical knowledge influence the wider world?

2.3.10 Study Guide

1. Study about the Indus Valley Civilization through advanced urban planning, drainage, water management, trade, and craftsmanship to know the ancient Indian knowledge
2. Recollect the role of Vedas as ancient Indian texts that preserve knowledge related to spirituality, rituals, philosophy, nature and society.
3. Know about Indian scholars and their important contributions in mathematics, astronomy, medicine, etc.
4. Understand the unique perspectives of the Philosophy on the nature of reality, self, and existence.
5. By and large, IKS integrates history, science, philosophy, health, art, culture and sustainable living into a holistic approach to knowledge and life.

2.3.11 Suggested Readings

1. Dasgupta, S. (1922–1955). *A history of Indian philosophy* (Vols. 1–5). Cambridge University Press.
2. Kapur, K., & Singh, A. K. (Eds.). (2005). *Indian knowledge systems: Volume 1*. D.K. Printworld.
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Lesson 2.4 - Institutions of Learning in Ancient India

2.4.0 Learning Objectives

After studying this lesson, the learners will be able to:

- Understand development of learning traditions from ancient times.
- Learn about the Gurukul system and understand the importance of the *Guru-Shishya Parampara*.
- Know the role of institutions in promoting higher education and attracting learners from different regions.
- Appreciate India's rich educational heritage in intellectual development.
- Understand ancient teaching and learning methods
- Develop respect for teachers and scholars

2.4.1 Introduction

Ancient India established several renowned centres of higher learning that attracted students from different regions of Asia. Ancient India was home to influential educational institutions like Gurukuls, Nalanda, and Takshashila which laid the foundation for modern universities. The Gurukul system emphasized personalized learning and holistic development, while Takshashila introduced a multidisciplinary approach, attracting students from across Asia. Nalanda perfected large-scale education as the world's first residential university, fostering rigorous academic standards and international scholarship before its eventual destruction. These institutions offered advanced education in philosophy, medicine, mathematics, astronomy, grammar, law, arts, and other disciplines.

2.4.2 Gurukula as Ancient India's Learning Centre

The Gurukula system formed the foundation of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS). The Gurukul system dates back to 5000 BCE, during the Vedic period. The word Gurukula comes from two Sanskrit words: “Guru,” meaning teacher, and “Kula,” meaning family or home. So, a Gurukula was essentially the home or place of a Guru, where students lived and learned under the guidance of a wise teacher in a residential setting. It was not just a place for academic learning but also for character building,

discipline, and holistic development. Boys (and in some cases, girls) between 8-12 years underwent the Upanayana (sacred thread ceremony), marking their initiation into formal education. Gurukulas were usually located in peaceful areas like forests or villages, far from the noise and distractions of the cities. This environment helped students focus on their studies and develop a deep understanding of the subjects they were learning. Education lasted 12-14 years, depending on the mastery of subjects. Students (Shishyas) lived as equals, irrespective of social status, and performed daily chores (Seva) as part of learning humility. Graduation was marked by the Samavartana (convocation) ceremony, where students offered Guru Dakshina (a token of gratitude).

Curriculum

The Gurukula curriculum covered a wide range of subjects, including:

- The Vedas and Upanishads
- Sanskrit language and grammar
- Mathematics
- Astronomy and astrology
- Medicine (Ayurveda)
- Philosophy and ethics
- Music, arts, and literature
- Warfare and archery (for Kshatriyas)
- Agriculture and vocational skills

Teaching Methods in Gurukuls

1. Oral Tradition (Shruti & Smriti)
Knowledge was transmitted orally through recitation, storytelling, and debates. Emphasis on memorization, critical thinking, and discussion.
2. Experiential & Practical Learning
Yoga, Meditation, and Martial Arts for physical and mental discipline. Agriculture, Astronomy, and Medicine (Ayurveda) for practical skills.
3. One-on-One Mentorship
The Guru personalized education based on each student's aptitude.

Role of the Guru

The guru was more than a teacher. He served as a guide and mentor; moral and spiritual role model; counselor who shaped the student's personality and guardian responsible for the student's overall development

Duties of Students

Students were expected to respect and obey the guru; live a disciplined and simple life; participate in household and community work; practice honesty, self-control, and humility and Dedicate themselves to learning and service.

Relevance of Gurukula system Today

Many principles of the Gurukula system remain valuable in modern education:

- Holistic development of students.
- Strong teacher–student relationships.
- Experiential and activity-based learning.
- Character education and ethical values.
- Integration of academics with practical life skills and well-being.

The Gurukul system was not just about memorizing texts-it was about building character, resilience, and wisdom. While modern education has its merits, integrating Gurukul-inspired practices can create a more balanced, humane, and sustainable learning model.

By blending ancient wisdom with modern innovation, we can shape an education system that nurtures not just scholars, but enlightened, responsible global citizens.

Learning Activity: 1

Interview an elderly person in your family or community to know about traditional methods of learning before the widespread availability of schools, television or the internet.

Prepare a brief report covering the following points:

- how knowledge was acquired;
- who taught them;
- the role of family and community;
- similarities and differences compared to present-day education.

2.4.3 Takshashila

Takshashila, located in Taxila (modern-day Taxila near Rawalpindi, Pakistan) present day Pakistan, is regarded as one of the earliest centres of higher education in the world, flourishing from around 700 BCE to the 5th century CE. Located along major trade routes in ancient Gandhara, it served as a melting pot of cultures under various rulers, including the Mauryas and Kushans. Throughout its history, Takshashila changed hands from the Achaemenid Persians and Alexander the Great to the Mauryas, Indo-Greeks, and Kushans. Even with these changes, the school's academic spirit stayed strong each ruling dynasty contributing to its evolution.

Key features of Takshashila's pedagogy:

- **Experiential learning:** Observation, practice, and contemplation were valued over rote memorisation.
- **Dialogue and debate:** The Shastrartha (philosophical debate) encouraged critical thinking and reasoning.
- **Holistic curriculum:** Subjects interweave the spiritual, moral, and practical dimensions of life.
- **Oral transmission:** Knowledge was passed through recitation, discussion, and apprenticeship, ensuring internalisation rather than mechanical recall.

The Vedas and Śilpa (arts and crafts) were foundational studies. Mastery of pronunciation (śikṣā), grammar (vyākaraṇa), ritual performance (kalpa), prosody (chandas), and etymology (nirukta) was essential. Every discipline was viewed as a path toward dharma (righteous living) and moksha (spiritual liberation).

Curriculum:

Takshashila's curriculum was astonishingly comprehensive, integrating both humanities and sciences. Records from Buddhist texts and later commentaries list 64 major disciplines, including:

- **Politics and economics:** Arthashastra and Rājaneeti (political science).
- **Grammar and linguistics:** Ashtadhyayi of Panini, although it is the foundation of modern linguistics.

- **Medicine and surgery:** Sushruta Samhita and Charaka Samhita traditions.
- **Law and justice:** Dharmashastra and jurisprudence.
- **Astronomy and mathematics:** Studies in planetary motion, geometry, and arithmetic.
- **Philosophy and logic:** Nyaya, Sankhya, and Buddhist metaphysics.
- **Military science:** Dhanurveda, strategy, and martial training.
- **Arts and architecture:** Music, painting, Vāstu (architecture), and poetry.

This interdisciplinary curriculum prepared students to become not just specialists, but wise citizens and ethical leaders.

Renowned Teachers and Alumni

The brilliance of Takshashila's teachers and alumni illuminates its legacy, shaping Indian civilisations for centuries.

- **Panini:** The father of Sanskrit grammar who authored the Ashtadhyayi, a foundational Sanskrit grammar text that influenced global linguistics.
- **Chanakya (Kautilya/Vishnugupta):** Author of the Arthashastra, political strategist who mentored Chandragupta Maurya, founder of the Mauryan Empire. He is a philosopher, economist, and statesman; Chandragupta Maurya,
- **Jivaka (or Jeevaka):** Eminent physician of Magadha and personal doctor to King Bimbisara and the Buddha. He is a pioneer in Ayurvedic medicine.
- **Charaka:** the legendary Ayurvedic physician associated with the Charaka Samhita.
- **Pingala,** a mathematician and prosodist, was an early contributor to binary number theory.

These luminaries exemplified Takshashila's commitment to cultivating intellects that combined rationality, compassion, and practical wisdom.

Global Reach:

Takshashila drew students not only from India but from distant regions like Babylonia (Iraq), Greece, and Central Asia. It was a hub for practical and theoretical knowledge.

Takshashila operated on the gurukul model but scaled up, with individual teachers specializing in subjects. Its decline came gradually with invasions and shifting political power around the 5th century CE, but its influence on early medicine, grammar, and statecraft endured.

Archaeological excavations led by Sir Alexander Cunningham in the 19th century unearthed extensive ruins of monasteries, lecture halls, residential complexes, and stupas, confirming textual references. The site of ancient Takshashila is composed of three main cities, representing different historical eras

- **Bhir Mound:** The oldest city (6th century BCE), featuring early Brahmanical settlements.
- **Sirkap:** Built by the Indo-Greeks in the 2nd century BCE. It has symmetrical streets and stone walls, which are typical of Hellenistic city planning.
- **Sirsukh:** Established by the Kushans (1st century CE), showcasing large monasteries and Buddhist stupas.

Notable monuments include the Dharmarajika Stupa, Jaulian Monastery, and Mohra Muradu Monastery, each of which symbolises the spiritual and educational synthesis of Takshashila's culture. These ruins now form a UNESCO World Heritage Site, recognized for their contribution to global education and architecture.

2.4.4 Nalanda

Nalanda is the Jewel of Ancient Indian Education. Renowned as one of the world's earliest universities, it was established during the Gupta period in the 5th century CE, most likely under the rule of Kumaragupta I. Nalanda reached its peak between the 5th and 12th centuries CE and became one of the greatest educational institutions in history. Nalanda was located in present-day Bihar and attracted thousands of students and teachers from countries such as China, Korea, Japan, Tibet, Sri Lanka, and Southeast Asia. Its reputation, preserved through the writings of the 7th-century Chinese scholar Xuanzang (also known as Yuan Chwang and Hiuen Tsang), provides us with a vivid glimpse into the golden age of Indian education. It was not just a university but also a great centre for Buddhist studies and cultural exchange.

Features of Nalanda University

Nalanda had a well-organized campus with:

- Large classrooms and lecture halls
- Monasteries for students and teachers
- Beautiful gardens and temples
- A massive library with thousands of manuscripts
- Separate hostels for students

Historical records mention that Nalanda had around 10,000 students and 2,000 teachers at its peak. The university followed strict rules and high academic standards. Students had to pass difficult entrance examinations before gaining admission.

Subjects Studied at Nalanda

Students at Nalanda studied various subjects such as:

- Buddhist philosophy
- Logic and reasoning
- Grammar and literature
- Mathematics and astronomy
- Medicine
- Art and architecture
- Politics and law

One of the most famous visitors to Nalanda was the Chinese traveler Xuanzang, who studied there for several years. He wrote detailed accounts about the university's excellent education system, discipline, and intellectual environment. Another Chinese scholar, Yijing, also praised Nalanda in his writings.

Teaching Methods in Ancient Indian Universities

Education focused on both theoretical and practical knowledge. Teachers used lectures, debates, discussions, storytelling, and question-answer sessions to help students understand concepts deeply. Students lived close to their teachers, creating a strong bond between guru and disciple. Discipline, respect, and dedication were considered essential qualities for learning. Education was mostly free, and many kings and wealthy people donated money to support these institutions.

The ancient education system aimed to develop intellectual ability, moral values, and spiritual understanding together. Students were encouraged to live simple lives and focus completely on gaining knowledge.

Nalanda is an example of India's rich educational heritage. It demonstrated the importance of knowledge, discipline, research, and cultural exchange in society. It attracted students from across the world and made India a global center of learning. Their contribution to education, philosophy, science, and culture remains unforgettable. Even in the modern age, Nalanda and Takshashila remind us that India has a deep tradition of intellectual excellence and world-class education.

2.4.5 Vikramashila

Situated in Bhagalpur, Bihar, on top of the hills along the banks of the river Ganges, it was famous as a centre of learning of Tantric Buddhism. King Dharmapala (783–820 CE), the second ruler of the illustrious Pala Dynasty, which ruled over Bengal and Bihar, established Vikramashila University. The main feature of the site has been a central stupa. Taranath, a Tibetan scholar, was the first to record its existence under the name Vikramshila Mahavihar. The Pala rulers were great patrons of Buddhism, art, and education. Dharmapala founded Vikramashila the most celebrated Buddhist seat of learning. Unlike Nalanda's broad curriculum, Vikramashila specialised in Tantric Buddhism, Buddhist logic and philosophy, making it a spiritual epicentre for the practice and transmission of Vajrayana teachings. It became a model for monastic education, where monks, scholars, and teachers engaged deeply with both theory and practice. The university maintained close academic interactions with Nalanda. During the ancient period, a temple stood in the centre of Vikramshila University. A life-size replica of the Mahabodhi tree is housed in this temple.

Curriculum and Pedagogical Environment

Vikramashila's curriculum reflected a holistic integration of intellectual training and spiritual discipline. Students received rigorous instruction in:

- Buddhist logic (Hetuvidya)
- Philosophy (Darshana)
- Metaphysics
- Tantras (Vajrayana texts)
- Grammar (Vyakarana)

- Theology and ethics
- Astronomy, law, and literature

Vikramashila served as a laboratory of philosophical innovation, particularly in Tantric metaphysics and ritual practice. It emphasized the transformative potential of wisdom and compassion through meditative visualization, mantras, and symbolic gestures.

2.4.6 Vallabhi

Vallabhi (also spelled **Vallabhi**) was one of the most important centres of learning in ancient India between the 6th and 8th centuries CE. It was located in (modern-day Bhavnagar), Gujarat. It flourished under the Maitraka dynasty. The university enjoyed royal patronage from the Maitraka rulers, who provided grants and support for education. The University of Vallabhi was an important centre of Buddhist learning and championed the cause of Hinayana (**Theravada**) Buddhism between 600 AD and 1200 AD. Gunamati and Sthiramati, two great Buddhist academics, are supposed to have graduated from this university. Vallabhi became a renowned seat of higher education, attracting students from different parts of India. The curriculum included **Vedas, philosophy, grammar, logic, medicine, mathematics, law, politics, and commerce**. According to the Chinese Buddhist pilgrim Xuanzang, Vallabhi had numerous monasteries, thousands of monks, and a high reputation for learning. Graduates of Vallabhi often obtained important administrative positions in the kingdom, making it a centre for training scholars and officials. The institution declined after repeated invasions and the fall of the Maitraka dynasty in the late 8th century.

Apart from religious sciences, the following courses are available:

- Niti (Political Science, Statesmanship)
- Varta (Business, Agriculture)
- Administration
- Philosophy and Religious Thought (especially Buddhist philosophy)
- Accounting, Economics, and Law

2.4.7 Odantapuri

Odantapuri (also called Uddandapura) was considered the second oldest of India's universities. Odantapuri was founded by Gopala, the first ruler of the Pala dynasty, in the 8th century CE. This was situated

in Maghada now Bihar. It emerged as a significant Buddhist educational institution with emphasis on higher learning and manuscript preservation. Odantapuri (in Tibetan records) or Uddandapura, was an important seat of Buddhist learning during the Pala period (8th to 12th centuries AD). It was a renowned centre for Mahayana Buddhism and later Vajrayana Buddhism. Subjects taught included Buddhist philosophy, logic, grammar, medicine, astronomy, and Sanskrit literature.

2.4.8 Jagaddala University

Pala King Rampala established Jagaddala University in the early 11th century. It is located in Varendra, North Bengal, but is now in Bangladesh. Archaeologists have found stone sculptures, inscriptions, terracotta plaques, ornate bricks, and a terracotta skull. The sculptures depict Khadirbani Tara, Avalokiteshvara, Heramba, Vishnu, Nairatma, Hevajra, and Shakti. Granite stone was used in architectural components like granite beams and pillars.

Learning Activity: 2

Major Ancient Universities of India

Include a map showing:

- Takshashila
- Nalanda
- Vikramashila
- Vallabhi
- Odantapuri

Activity: Locate these centres on a political map of South Asia and identify the present-day Countries or States in which they are situated.

2.4.9 Pushpagiri University

Pushpagiri University was founded in the third century by emperor Ashoka and thrived for the next 800 years until the eleventh century. It located in ancient Kalinga kingdom (modern-day Odisha). The university campus was spread across three adjoining hills – Lalitgiri, Ratnagiri, and Udayagiri. These hills are known as the 'diamond triangle of Odisha'. The Chinese traveller Huiyen Tsang visited this university in 639 CE. He had seen nearly eleven stupas erected by Ashoka in Odisha.

2.4.10 Somapura Mahavihara

It was located in Bengal and flourished for 400 years till the 12th century. Somapura University was a major centre of learning for Bauddha Dharma (Buddhism), Jina Dharma (Jainism), and Sanatana Dharma (Hinduism). It is founded by Dharmapala of the Pala dynasty during the late 8th century. Even today one can find ornamental terracotta on its outer walls depicting the influence of these three traditions. Its layout perfectly adapted to its religious function, this monastery city represents a unique artistic achievement. With its simple, harmonious lines and its profusion of carved decoration, it influenced Buddhist architecture as far away as Cambodia.

2.4.11 Relevance of Ancient Educational Practices Today

The relevance of ancient education in the modern education system has been widely discussed and debated. There are differences in the methods, tools, and societal contexts between ancient and modern education. Ancient Indian education emphasized holistic development—intellectual, moral, and spiritual, critical thinking and philosophy; individualized learning; ethics and morality; practical skills and apprenticeship; cultural and historical awareness; extracting wisdom from ancient practices and fostering holistic development through Universal Human Values (UHV). Rooted in the Gurukula system, it fostered deep teacher-student relationships and integrated ethical values into all aspects of learning. In contrast, the modern system is characterized by institutionalized learning, technological integration, and a focus on employability.

India's rich educational heritage, rooted in ancient wisdom, thrived during the Golden Age of Indian Culture, marked by achievements in mathematics, astronomy, and Sanskrit epics. The Vedic period employed verbal/oral and thinking-based teaching methods, echoing today's multidisciplinary approach outlined in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. It also emphasizes holistic, multidisciplinary, and experiential education, echoing several principles found in Indian Knowledge Systems

Learning Activity: 3

Prepare a comparative chart showing similarities and differences between the Gurukula system and modern university education.

Consider the following aspects:

- curriculum;
- teaching methods;
- assessment;
- student–teacher relationship;
- use of technology;
- values and ethics.

Present your findings in class or through an online discussion forum.

2.4.12 Summary

Ancient India developed effective methods for transmitting knowledge through oral traditions, dialogue, observation, apprenticeship, and manuscripts. The Gurukula system promoted holistic development, individualized instruction, experiential learning, and ethical values. Major centres of higher learning such as Takshashila, Nalanda, Vikramashila, Vallabhi, and Odantapuri attracted scholars from different parts of Asia and fostered interdisciplinary learning. Many principles of these traditional educational practices—such as inquiry, mentorship, experiential learning, and value-based education—remain relevant in contemporary higher education and are reflected in the goals of the National Education Policy (2020).

2.4.13 Key Terms

- **Alumni:** Alumni are former students or graduates of an educational institution.
- **Community Living:** It means living, learning, working, and sharing responsibilities together as a group.
- **Curriculum:** It is the planned set of subjects, learning experiences, activities, and educational goals provided by an institution.
- **Experiential Learning:** It is a method of learning through direct experience, practical activities, observation, and reflection.
- **Gurukul System:** An ancient Indian residential education system in which students lived with and learned directly from their teacher (Guru).

- **Holistic Curriculum:** A curriculum that develops the intellectual, physical, emotional, social, ethical and spiritual dimensions of a learner.
- **Pedagogy:** The methods, approaches and practices used by teacher to facilitate learning.
- **Tantric Buddhism:** A form of Buddhist practice that uses meditation, mantras, rituals, visualization and other techniques as paths toward spiritual realization.
- **Upanayana:** A traditional ceremony marking a student's entry into formal education and the disciplined life of learning.

2.4.14 Self Assessment Questions

2.4.14.1 Multiple Choice Questions

Choose the correct answer

1. In the Gurukula system, students traditionally learned through:
 - A) Only written examinations
 - B) Direct interaction, practice, and observation
 - C) Online lectures
 - D) Printed textbooks only
2. Takshashila was located in the region of present-day:
 - A) Bihar
 - B) Gujarat
 - C) Punjab region of Pakistan
 - D) Odisha
3. Which ancient institution was located in present-day Bihar?
 - A) Nalanda
 - B) Vallabhi
 - C) Pushpagiri
 - D) Takshashila
4. Which Chinese pilgrim provided valuable accounts of Nalanda?
 - A) Xuanzang
 - B) Ibn Battuta
 - C) Al-Biruni
 - D) Megasthenes
5. Pushpagiri was an important ancient centre of learning located in:
 - A) Odisha
 - B) Gujarat
 - C) Punjab
 - D) Rajasthan

(Answers: 1. B) Direct interaction, practice, and observation; 2. C) Punjab region of Pakistan; 3. A) Nalanda; 4. A) Xuanzang; 5. A) Odisha)

2.4.14.2 In-text Questions

1. Explain the importance of oral tradition in preserving Indian Knowledge Systems.
2. What are the major features of the Gurukula system?

3. How does experiential learning contribute to education?
4. Why is Nalanda regarded as one of the world's greatest ancient universities?
5. Compare apprenticeship with modern internship programmes.
6. Where was ancient Taxila University located?
7. Who is a famous scholar who studied at Taxila University?
8. Mention any four subjects associated with learning at Takshashila.
9. What was the significance of Vikramashila as a centre of Buddhist learning?
10. Where was Vallabhi located, and what was its educational importance?
11. What do you know about Jagaddala Mahavihara?
12. Why is Pushpagiri significant in the history of ancient Indian education?

2.4.14.3 Case Study

Analyse how the principles of Takshashila continue to appear in contemporary Indian educational institutions and policy today.

Learning Points:

1. **IITs:** The IITs reflect the Takshashila model of multidisciplinary technical education and close mentor–student relations.
2. **Nalanda University Revival (2014–present):** The re-establishment of Nalanda University in Bihar in 2014 represents a revival of India's ancient university tradition. The idea of developing India as a centre for global learning. (Source: Nalanda University Act, 2010; Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.)
3. **NEP 2020 and Multidisciplinary Education:** India's National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 draws on the gurukula tradition and institutions like Takshashila to promote holistic, multidisciplinary education.

Elaborate on the above points

2.4.15 Study Guide

1. The **Gurukula system** was a traditional residential form of education in which students lived with their Guru and learned through close interaction, discipline, and practice emphasising the

holistic development of the learner. **Experiential learning** was an important feature of Gurukula education.

2. **Takshashila** was an ancient centre of higher learning in the northwestern Indian subcontinent attracting students and teachers from different regions and was associated with subjects such as medicine, politics, philosophy, grammar, and military studies.
3. **Nalanda** was a renowned ancient residential centre of higher learning located in present-day Bihar and became an important centre of Buddhist scholarship.
4. **Xuanzang (Hiuen Tsang)** and other travellers provided valuable accounts of Nalanda, its teachers, students, curriculum, and academic environment.
5. **Vikramashila** was a major Buddhist learning centre, **Vallabhi**, located in present-day Gujarat, **Odantapuri**, located in present-day Bihar, **Jagaddala Mahavihara** was another important Pala-period Buddhist centre, **Pushpagiri**, located in Odisha, **Somapura Mahavihara**, located at Paharpur in present-day Bangladesh - emphasized **multidisciplinary learning, debate, teacher-student interaction, residential education, and the exchange of knowledge across regions.**

2.4.16 References

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UNIT – III

Lesson 3.1- Communicating Culture: Introduction

3.1.0 Learning objectives

After studying this unit, learners will be able to:

- Understand the concept of culture and communicating culture.
- Know about various tools that transmit culture from generation to generation.
- Understand the concept of Communication
- Appreciate the relationship between communication and culture
- Classify channels of communicating culture.

3.1.1 Introduction

Culture is not transmitted only through books and written records. For centuries, communities across the world have preserved their beliefs, customs, values, and history through oral traditions. In India, oral narratives such as myths, folktales, legends, ballads, proverbs, riddles, songs, and epics have played a vital role in preserving cultural identity. Tribal communities, in particular, rely heavily on oral traditions to pass knowledge from one generation to another. This unit introduces the concept of oral narratives and explores myths, folktales and folklore as they form part communicating culture.

3.1.2 Assessment of Prior Knowledge

Before beginning this unit, answer the following questions.

1. What do you think culture means?
2. Name three festivals celebrated in your community.
3. What customs or traditions do you follow?
4. What language(s) do you speak at home?
5. Can you identify any traditional dress, food, music, dance, or art from your region?
6. Have you participated in any cultural programme or celebration?

7. Do people in different regions of India celebrate festivals in the same way?
8. Can you identify examples of objects (e.g., pottery, musical instruments) and practices (e.g., rituals, songs) that are part of your culture?
9. Who teaches you about your traditions and customs?
10. How do you learn about your family's culture?

Write your responses in 3–5 sentences.

3.1.3 Meaning of Culture

The term “culture” originates from the Latin word *cultura*, which means cultivation or refinement. Initially, it was associated with the cultivation of land, but in modern social sciences, it refers to the cultivation of the human mind, personality and social life. Culture is communication, communication is culture. Culture is the system of knowledge shared by a relatively large group of people. Culture refers to the collective beliefs, values, customs, languages, rituals, artistic expressions and practices that characterize a particular group or society that are passed down to generation to generation. Culture is learned through social interaction rather than inherited biologically and it continues to evolve while preserving important traditions. It consists of material culture, such as houses, tools, clothing and pottery, and non-material culture, such as language, beliefs, rituals, customs, myths and folklore.

3.1.4 Definitions of Culture

Several scholars have defined culture in different ways:

- **Edward B. Tylor (1871)** defined culture as “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society.”
- **Clifford Geertz (1973)** described culture as a system of shared meanings expressed through symbols that help people understand their world.
- According to CARLA culture is defined as the shared patterns of behaviours and interactions, cognitive constructs, and affective understanding that are learned through a process of socialization. These shared patterns identify the members of a culture group while also distinguishing those of another group.

Though there are many definitions, all agree at one particular point that culture is learned, shared, transmitted and continuously recreated.

Learning activity: 1

Write down two more definition of the term Culture.

3.1.5 Understanding Culture

Culture is very often described as the "way of life" of a people. Culture is not inherited biologically; but learned through interaction with family, community, educational institutions, and society. Culture shapes the way people think, behave, communicate, celebrate festivals, worship, prepare food, dress, and relate to one another. It also influences how communities understand nature, interpret history, and express their emotions. Culture as a dynamic process that evolves over time. New experiences, technologies, and interactions with other cultures continuously influence cultural practices while preserving many traditional values.

Learning Activity: 2

List down the names of festivals celebrated by people in different regions.

3.1.6 Features of Culture

Culture is not static but dynamic, evolving with changing times and social conditions. Its key characteristics can be summarized as follows:

- 1. Culture is Learned** – Culture is not a born quality and is not instinctive but acquired through socialization. We learn it from our family, friends, schools, communities, religion and media. Children learn language, manners and values through family, school, peers and media. For example, a child learns to greet elders by saying “Namaste” or by touching their feet because family members teach them this behavior.
- 2. Culture is Shared** – Culture belongs to groups, not isolated individuals. Shared symbols, rituals and traditions create social cohesion. Members of a society usually have common beliefs, values, customs, traditions and ways of behaviour. For example, In India, many people celebrate Diwali by lighting lamps, decorating their homes and sharing sweets. These practices are shared by members of the community.

3. Culture is Symbolic – Culture uses symbols to communicate ideas, meanings and feelings. Symbols such as language, gestures, clothing, colours, objects, signs, art and rituals represent meanings that are central to culture. Symbols allow communication and understanding beyond material reality. For example, The Indian national flag is a symbol of the nation. Similarly, folded hands in the “Namaste” gesture symbolize respect and greeting.

4. Culture is Adaptive – It changes in response to environmental, technological, needs and social conditions. For example, digital culture has emerged with advancements in technology. Earlier, people commonly communicated through letters. Today, many people use WhatsApp, email, and video calls to communicate. This shows how cultural practices adapt to technology

5. Culture is Integrated – The different elements of culture such as beliefs, values, norms, customs, religion, economy, family and social institutions are interconnected. A change in one part often affects the others. For example, Changes in women's education and employment can influence family roles, marriage practices, child-rearing and economic conditions. These aspects of society are interconnected.

6. Culture is Normative – It prescribes rules of behaviour through norms and values, guiding individuals on what is acceptable or unacceptable. These rules may be formal or informal. For example, in many cultures, people are expected to respect elders, stand in a queue, dress appropriately for certain occasions and behave politely with guests. Breaking these norms may lead to criticism or social disapproval.

3.1.7 Components of Culture

Culture consists of both intangible and tangible things. The former is known as nonmaterial culture, which includes things like ideas or values of a society. In contrast, material culture has a physical existence, such as a clothing item.

Both nonmaterial and material are linked because physical items often symbolize cultural ideas (Little, 2016). For example, you wear a suit (not a pair of shorts) to a business meeting, which is linked to the workplace values of formality & decorum. Thus, Culture consists of both **material and non-material elements**.

Material Culture

Material culture refers to physical objects created and used by people. Examples include:

- Houses
- Agricultural tools
- Musical instruments
- Paintings
- Pottery
- Clothing
- Jewellery

Non-Material Culture

Non-material culture includes intangible aspects of society. Examples include:

- Language
- Religious beliefs
- Myths
- Folktales
- Moral values
- Customs
- Rituals
- Songs
- Proverbs

Learning Activity: 3

Identify whether the following belong to material or non-material culture.

Item	Category
Folk song	
Traditional drum	
Marriage ritual	
Pottery	
Myth	

3.1.8 Understanding Communication

Communication is the process of exchange of ideas, information, feelings, knowledge, and experiences. It enables people to cooperate, learn, and preserve social relationships. Communication may occur through:

- Spoken language
- Written language
- Gestures
- Facial expressions
- Symbols
- Music
- Dance
- Art
- Digital media

Among these, oral communication is the oldest and most fundamental. Long before writing systems were developed, human beings communicated through speech, storytelling, songs, chants, and performances. These oral forms became the primary means of transmitting culture across generations.

3.1.9 Communication and Culture

Culture and communication are closely connected. Culture influences communication by determining:

- Language
- Gestures
- Symbols
- Storytelling styles
- Social etiquette
- Expressions of respect

Communication preserves and transmits culture by sharing traditions, beliefs, customs, and historical experiences. Thus, communication and culture continuously shape one another.

Learning Activity: 4

Think of a festival celebrated in your community.

List three forms of communication that are used during the celebration.

3.1.10 Meaning of Communicating Culture

Communicating culture is an essential function of education and society. Communicating culture refers to the process of transmitting the beliefs, values, customs, traditions, language, knowledge, and way of life of a society from one generation to another. It is the process by which individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds interact and exchange information with each other. Education, family, community, literature, art, media, and religious practices all play an important role in communicating culture. It ensures that a community's knowledge, values, beliefs, and traditions are preserved and passed on.

3.1.11 Channels of Communicating Culture

Communicating culture can take place through the following channels:

1. **Family:** Children first learn language, customs, values, and social behaviour from their families.
2. **Education:** Schools and universities teach history, literature, moral values, arts, and cultural traditions.
3. **Language:** Language is the medium that expresses and preserves cultural knowledge and identity. Communicating in a particular language can convey a culture's history and social structure worldview.
4. **Religion and Festivals:** Religious practices, beliefs, festivals and symbols transmit cultural traditions and provide ethical guidelines that influence behaviours.
5. **Arts and Literature:** Music, dance, drama, painting, sculpture, theatre, folklore, visual arts, film-shows and literature preserve and communicate cultural heritage reflecting the cultural values, stories, emotions and aesthetics.
6. **Media and Technology:** Various forms of media and technology like books, newspapers, television, films, radio, social media, and the internet, can disseminate cultural ideas and traditions across the world.
7. **Social Interaction:** Everyday interactions within families, communities, and workplaces reinforce cultural norms and values.
8. **Customs and Traditions:** Participating in or observing rituals, ceremonies, festivals, and rites of passage can offer insights into the beliefs, values, and social structures of a community.

9. **Symbols and Icons:** Cultural symbols, flags, emblems, monuments, and landmarks often serve as representations of a group's identity and history.
10. **Social etiquette and Behaviour:** Understanding and respecting cultural codes such as manners, gestures, greetings, etiquettes and social norms is crucial for building effective relationships.
11. **History and Heritage:** Sharing stories from the past preserves cultural heritage and transmit values to future generations.

3.1.12 Need for Communicating Culture

Communicating the culture is essential for the continuity and development of society. Communicating culture is necessary because of the following reasons:

1. **Preservation of Cultural Heritage:** It helps to protect and transmit traditions, customs, languages and historical knowledge to future generations.
2. **Development of Identity:** It gives individuals a sense of belongingness and strengthens their identity.
3. **Transmission of Values:** It teaches moral values such as honesty, respect, responsibility, cooperation, and tolerance.
4. **Continuity of Society:** It ensures that the knowledge, beliefs, and practices of one generation are passed on to the next, maintaining cultural continuity.
5. **Respect for Diversity:** Learning about different cultures encourages tolerance, mutual respect, and peaceful coexistence in multicultural societies.
6. **Adaptation to Change:** Effective communication of culture helps societies preserve their core values while adapting to changing social, economic, and technological conditions.

Thus, communicating culture preserves cultural heritage, develops identity, promotes moral values, strengthens social unity, and prepares individuals to live responsibly in both their own communities and a diverse global society. It also plays a vital role in fostering effective relationships, resolving conflicts, and promoting cross-cultural understanding.

3.1.13 Summary

Culture influences the way people communicate, while communication helps preserve and transmit cultural values, traditions and historical experiences across generations. Communication is the process of exchanging ideas, information, feelings, and experiences through spoken and written language, gestures, symbols, music, dance, art, and digital media. Oral communication is the oldest form of communication and has played a vital role in preserving and transmitting culture through storytelling, songs and performances. Communicating culture means transmitting a society's culture through institutions such as family, education, religion, arts, literature, media, technology, and social interaction by using various channels, including festivals, customs, symbols, history, social etiquette and cultural practices, to strengthen cultural identity and promote understanding among different communities. Thus, communicating culture is essential as it preserves cultural heritage, develops identity, transmits moral values, ensures social continuity, promotes respect for cultural diversity and enables societies to adapt to changing social and technological conditions.

3.1.14 Key Terms

- Beliefs: Ideas or convictions that a person accepts as true.
- Communication: The process of sharing information, ideas or feelings with others.
- Culture: The shared way of life, traditions, values, and practices of a group of people.
- Cultural Heritage: The traditions, customs, monuments and values passed down from one generation to another.
- Customs: Traditional ways of behaving that are commonly followed by a community.
- Family: A group of people related by blood, marriage, or adoption who care for each other.
- Festivals: Special occasions celebrated by people to mark cultural, religious or social events.
- Language: A system of spoken, written, or signed communication used by people.
- Rituals: Fixed actions or ceremonies performed in a traditional or religious way.

- Social Etiquette: The accepted rules of polite and respectful behaviour in society.
- Symbols: Objects, signs or images that represent an idea, belief, or meaning.
- Values: Principles or standards that guide a person's behaviour and decisions.

3.1.15 Self Assessment Questions

3.1.15.1 Multiple Choice Questions

Choose the Correct Answer

1. Which of the following is an example of material culture?
A. Language B. Rituals C. Pottery D. Folktales
2. Which of the following belongs to non-material culture?
A. Jewellery B. Musical instrument C. House
D. Proverbs
3. Which is the oldest and most fundamental form of communication?
A. Digital media B. Written language C. Oral communication
D. Television
4. Which of the following is NOT a channel of communicating culture?
A. Family B. Education C. Religion and Festivals
D. Weather
5. Which institution first teaches children language, customs, values, and social behaviour?
A. School B. Family C. Government D. Workplace

(Answers: 1. C. Pottery; 2. D. Proverbs; 3. C. Oral communication; 4. D. Weather; 5. B. Family)

3.1.15.2 Short Answer Questions

1. What is culture?
2. What is meant by communicating culture?
3. What is meant by material culture? Give two examples.
4. What is non-material culture? Mention any two examples.
5. State any four reasons why communicating culture is important.

6. Explain the relationship between culture and communication.
7. What is the relationship between language and culture?
8. What are cultural values? Give two examples.
9. What is meant by cultural diversity?
10. What is non-verbal communication in different cultures?

3.1.15.3 Long Answer Questions

1. Explain the concept of communicating culture and discuss its importance in society.
2. Explain the influence of media and technology on communicating culture.
3. Describe the role of customs, traditions, beliefs, and values in shaping communication practices.
4. Define culture. Explain its meaning, characteristics, and components with suitable examples.
5. Discuss the concepts of material culture and non-material culture. Explain their importance with appropriate examples.
6. What is meant by communicating culture? Explain its meaning and discuss the various channels through which culture is communicated.
7. Explain the need for communicating culture. How does it help in preserving cultural heritage, promoting identity, and ensuring social continuity?

3.1.15.4 Case Study

Ravi, an Indian student, joins an international university. On his first day, he greets his Japanese classmate by giving a friendly hug. His classmate feels uncomfortable because, in his culture, bowing is a more common way of greeting, especially with people they have just met. Ravi realizes that different cultures have different ways of showing respect.

Questions

1. What cultural difference is shown in this case?
2. Why did the misunderstanding occur?
3. How could Ravi communicate more effectively?
4. Which characteristic of culture is illustrated?

5. What is the main lesson?

3.1.16 Study Guide

- Learn the definitions of culture. Understand the components that comprise culture. Culture is passed from one generation to the next. Culture is the way of life shared by a group of people and is learned from family, school and the community.
- Recollect the characteristic features of culture: learned, shared, integrated and adapted. Remember that Culture changes over time while preserving important traditions. Respecting other cultures promotes unity, peace and understanding.
- Culture influences what we communicate, how we communicate, and how we interpret communication.
- How to Communicate Effectively Across Cultures. Remember: RESPECT:

R – Recognize cultural differences. E – Empathize with other people's perspectives. S – Stay open-minded. P – Pay attention to verbal and non-verbal signals. E – Explain when something is unclear. C – Check your understanding. T – Treat everyone with respect

3.1.17 Suggested Readings

1. Adelman, Jeremy, and Andreas Eckert, eds. 2024. *Narratives, Nations, and Other World Products in the Making of Global History*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
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4. McAdams, Dan P., & McLean, Kate. 2013. 'Narrative Identity.' *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 22(3), 233–238.
5. Riessman, Catherine Kohler. 2008. *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

Lesson 3.2 - Communicating Culture Through Oral Narratives: An Overview

3.2.0 Learning Objectives

After studying this Lesson, learners will be able to:

- Define oral literature and explain its distinguishing features.
- Identify the major forms of oral narratives.
- Describe the relationship between oral literature and culture.
- Understand the role of storytelling in traditional societies.
- Analyse the importance of oral narratives in contemporary society

3.2.1 Introduction

Communicating culture through oral narratives is one of the oldest methods. Before the widespread use of writing, oral narratives were one of the ways of preserving and communicating culture. It is an effective method of communicating culture because it preserves traditions, transmits values, strengthens cultural identity and educates future generations through stories and shared experiences. These narratives help communities to preserve history; religious beliefs; moral values; social customs; ecological knowledge and community identity. Storytelling during festivals, family gatherings, and community events fosters unity and cooperation. Stories teach moral values such as honesty, courage, kindness, and respect. Stories, songs, chants, proverbs, riddles, myths, legends and folktales were remembered, narrated, sung and performed, becoming the foundation of a community's cultural heritage.

In India, oral literature occupies a central place in cultural life. Every region, language, and community has its own repertoire of oral narratives. Tribal communities, in particular, continue to preserve their history, customs, ecological knowledge and religious beliefs through oral traditions. Even many classical literary works originated as oral compositions before being written down.

This Lesson explores the major forms of oral literature: myths, tales and folklore. Through this study, learners will understand how oral literature functions as a dynamic medium of cultural communication and

as an invaluable source for understanding the beliefs, values and identities of different societies.

3.2.2 Meaning of Oral Narratives

An Oral Narrative is one of the types of oral literature and can take the form of prose or poetry. An oral narrative is a story told via word of mouth rather than being written down and read often using gestures and facial expressions to convey the story. The storyteller typically employs theatrical devices but is only obligated to include them if they see them as necessary to the story. It may be narrated, sung, enacted, or performed before an audience. Oral narratives are elaborate tales passed down through generations, recited by a passionate speaker to an audience. There are many types of oral narratives, each with its own unique characteristics. It can be fiction or non-fiction, but they are more than just funny anecdotes and historical accounts. The oral narrative is more closely related to drama than prose and it is all about listening. Unlike written literature, oral narratives depend upon memory; performance; audience participation; repetition and collective ownership. But each storyteller may modify certain details while preserving the central message. It belongs to the community rather than to an individual author and often changes slightly with each retelling, making it a dynamic and living tradition. The most common types of oral narrative are myths, legends, folktales, and epic poetry.

Examples:

- The chants in the temples, bhajans, sankirtans, folk songs, legends, cult practices, the harvest songs and rituals, songs and legends associated with the celebrations of Holi festival, Nautanki, Ramayan Katha and other kathas, (stories), Harikathas, the ways of cooking large number of dishes in each region, Bhuta worship, Vedic yajnas, reciting Quran, Bible or Gurugranth and such other scriptures are all very much practiced in our country. All these Holy Books available in the written version today were in the oral versions once upon a time before they were scripted.
- In our childhood, always we were interested to listen to different stories every night from the grand parents or elderly neighbours. The children always looked forward for the story time. The stories of Ramayana, Mahabharata, stories of kings, queens, saints or legends from villages or pilgrimages, the events of freedom movement in

India are all told and transmitted through oral narratives. Many questions were asked and answers were given convincingly.

3.2.3 Origin of Oral Narratives

The origin of oral narratives dates back to pre-historic period when societies had not yet developed writing systems. In early years, people depend on spoken language to communicate their experiences. Various stories about the origin of the world, the changing seasons, animals, ancestors and supernatural beings were developed as an attempt to understand the environment. Before the invention of writing, elders acted as custodians of tradition, knowledge was memorised, songs helped people remember information, ritual chants preserved religious practices and storytelling educated younger generations. Many literary masterpieces were first composed orally before they were written down. Even after writing was invented, oral traditions continued to flourish alongside written literature.

Example

The **Vedas**, among the oldest sacred texts in India, were transmitted orally for centuries through highly disciplined methods of memorisation before they were compiled in written form. This oral tradition demonstrates the remarkable capacity of communities to preserve complex knowledge without written records.

Learning Activity: 1

Answer the following questions.

1. What stories were commonly narrated in your childhood?
2. Who narrated these stories?
3. Why do people tell stories repeatedly?
4. Can stories teach values?
5. Have you ever participated in a storytelling event?

Write your answers in about 200 words.

3.2.4 Characteristics of Oral Narratives

Oral narratives possess several distinctive characteristics that distinguish it from written literature. The only consistent characteristic of the oral narrative is that the teller recites the story to an audience and is typically passed down and adapted through generations. The following are the other characteristic features of Oral Narratives:

- 1. Oral Transmission:** Stories are passed from one generation to another through speech. Stories are learned by listening and are passed on through repeated narration. For example, grandparents narrate folktales to children, who later share the same stories with future generations.
- 2. Opening Formula:** It is used to indicate the beginning of a story. It takes the audience to the world of fantasy. Bones speak, a king is the lion, etc are examples of world of fantasy. Lon long ago; Once upon a time; a long time ago; there once was are the examples of opening formula.
- 3. Closing formula:** It makes the end of the story. It removes the audience from the world of fantasy and take them to the world of reality. 'and that is why'; 'and there ends my story'; 'from then onwards'; 'to come to the end of my story' are examples of closing formula.
- 4. Use of idiophones:** Use of words that imitate the movements or sounds made by the characters of the story is known as idiophones. For example: bees flew buzz buzzbuzz; or women laughed like hahahaha hahaha.
- 5. Repetition:** A word, phrase, sentence or song may be used again and again in a story to emphasise a point; sustain the mood; bring out the meaning and to maintain the rhythm.
- 6. Allusions:** To explain the complex issue reference of something the audience is familiar with is provided. For example, quoting familiar leader, Mahabharath, Ramayana, The Bible, historical events, etc.
- 7. Dialogue:** Making a character directly speaking to other is called dialogue. This method is used to bring out the theme, traits or to develop the plot of the story.
- 8. Suspense:** Audience is kept wondering what will happen next till the climax of the story is narrated.
- 9. Theatrics:** Oral narratives are typically performed, not merely recited. Tone, body language, vocal variation; gestures; facial expressions; music; dance; dramatic narration are important elements. Audience participation is common, especially during festivals and community gatherings.
- 10. Fantasy:** Imaginary and impossible things are created in a story to keep the interest going.

11. Audience Interaction: In oral narratives, the audience often plays an active role, sometimes participating in the storytelling.

12. Adaptability: Each performance of an oral narrative can differ, as the storyteller may adapt the tale for different audiences or circumstances

13. Anonymous and Collective Authorship: The original creator is usually unknown. Stories evolve gradually through the contributions of many storytellers over long periods. Consequently, it belongs to the community rather than to an individual and the entire community shares responsibility for preserving the narrative.

14. Educational Purpose: Stories teach morality; social responsibilities; religious beliefs; environmental ethics and community history

Learning Activity: 2

Observe a storytelling session, either in person or through an online recording.

Identify the following elements:

Observation	Notes
Narrator	
Audience	
Voice modulation	
Gestures	
Music	
Moral lesson	

3.2.5 Need for the study of Oral Narratives

Oral narratives significantly shape cultural identity by preserving history, values, and beliefs across generations. They foster continuity within communities. The following points would bring an idea about the need for the study of oral narratives.

- Studying oral narratives offers insight into language use, narrative structure, cultural values, and community identity.

- It is the way a society transmits its history, literature, and social order and knowledge of various kinds from one generation to the next generation without a writing system.
- They help us to understand how people lived, thought and expressed their values before written records became widespread.
- It preserves cultural heritage, promotes moral values, strengthens identity, enriches language and literature and helps future generations to appreciate the wisdom and traditions of the society.
- It has enhanced our ability to remember and narrate.
- In recent years, it has received international recognition to UNESCO's leading role in the adoption of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

3.2.6 Major Forms of Oral Traditions in India

India's oral literature includes a wide variety of literary forms each with its unique characteristics and purposes. Various types of oral narratives are listed below for reference:

1. Myths
2. Legends
3. Folktales
4. Folklore
5. Ballads
6. Proverbs
7. Fables
8. Riddles
9. Epic Poetry

The meaning of some important forms of oral narratives is given below:

Myths

They are sacred narrative explaining origins of the universe, gods, nature, human beings, animals, rivers, mountains, sacred places and religious beliefs.

Examples

- Creation stories from different tribal communities. The Gond creation myth explains the origin of earth through divine intervention and symbolizes balance between humans and nature.
- Stories associated with the Ganga, Himalayas, and sacred forests.
- Myths surrounding village deities.

Legends

Legends are stories associated with historical persons, places, or events that combine historical facts with imagination.

Examples

- Legends of regional heroes.
- Stories about ancient kings and queens.
- Narratives associated with famous temples and pilgrimage sites.

Folktales

Folktales are traditional stories narrated mainly for entertainment and moral instruction.

Examples

- Panchatantra stories
- Jataka. tales
- Akbar-Birbal stories
- Tenali Raman stories

Folklore

Folklore pertains to the collection of stories, customs, and beliefs held by a particular group often passed down through generations. This term, coined in the 19th century, originates from the words 'folk' meaning people, and 'lore' meaning stories.

For Example:

Superstitions: Knocking on wood for good luck, or believing that a black cat crossing your path brings bad luck

Ballads

Ballads are narrative songs recounting heroic deeds, romances, battles or historical events. They are commonly performed during festivals and community gatherings.

Examples:

Laila Majnu (North India):

The story of Laila and Majnu is a classic love story, popular in North India. It's a tale of love that transcends societal boundaries and obstacles.

Padmavat (Rajasthan):

"Padmavat" is an epic poem written by Sufi poet Malik Muhammad Jayasi. It narrates the love story of Rani Padmavati and Alauddin Khilji.

Proverbs

Proverbs are short traditional sayings expressing practical wisdom and life experiences.

Examples:

- "Unity is strength."
- "A stitch in time saves nine."

Most Indian languages possess hundreds of traditional proverbs that guide everyday behaviour.

Riddles

Questions or statements designed to test intelligence, observation, and reasoning. Are known as riddles. They are especially popular among children.

Examples:

Riddle: What month of the year has 28 days?

Answer: All of them

Riddle: What is full of holes but still holds water?

Answer: A sponge

Epics

A long poem, typically one derived from ancient oral tradition, narrating the deeds and adventures of heroic or legendary figures or the past history of a nation. It is long narrative poems celebrating heroic characters and significant cultural events.

Example: The Ramayana and The Mahabharata – ancient Sanskrit epics with complex narratives and philosophical themes.

Learning Activity: 3

Match the following:

Column A	Column B
Myth	Sacred narrative
Legend	Historical memory
Folktale	Moral lesson
Proverb	Traditional wisdom
Riddle	Intellectual challenge

3.2.7 Oral Traditions Across Different Regions of India

Although every Indian state has its own oral traditions, certain themes are common throughout the country. The diversity of these traditions demonstrates India's multicultural character while also highlighting shared human experiences such as birth, marriage, work, worship and death. India is culturally diverse country. It is a home to hundreds of languages, dialects, religions, ethnic groups and communities. This diversity is nurtured over thousands of years. In early years, before printing became widespread, oral communication was the principal means through which knowledge was shared. Every region of India has developed distinctive forms of oral literature based on its geography, language, occupation, religion and social history but share a common purpose of preserving collective memory and strengthening cultural diversity. The following table depicts Oral Traditions Across Different Regions of India:

Region	Examples of Oral Traditions
North India	Ballads of local heroes, devotional songs
South India	Temple legends, folk theatre, village myths
East India	Tribal creation stories, harvest songs
West India	Heroic ballads, folk epics
North-East India	Origin myths, clan histories, oral genealogies

3.2.8 Importance of Oral Narratives in Contemporary Society

Although modern society relies heavily on books, television, films, and digital media, oral narratives continue to play an important role.

Beyond the written word, the spoken narrative remains our most resilient cultural infrastructure. Every known society has developed complex narrative traditions. The following points highlight the importance of Oral narratives in contemporary society:

Tool of Resistance and Control:

Oral Narratives significantly enhance engagement, memory retention, emotional connections, intergenerational communication, provide community cohesion across generations and serve as tools of both resistance and control.

Fostering Cultural Identity:

They empower marginalized voices, enabling communities to share experiences and mobilize for change and play a crucial role in social activism and community building by preserving cultural narratives and fostering collective identity.

Preservation of Indigenous Knowledge

Traditional knowledge concerning herbal medicine; agriculture; weather prediction and food preservation continues to be preserved through oral traditions. As a result, oral traditions serve as vital tools for preserving cultural heritage and addresses current societal challenges.

Digital Documentation

Modern technology has opened new possibilities for preserving oral traditions. In today's digital age, they adapt to contemporary culture by integrating modern medium such as social media, podcasts, interviews, public speeches and digital storytelling and reach wider audiences ensuring that oral narratives remain relevant and vibrant with younger generations. This nurtures cultural continuity and innovation. These technologies ensure that traditional knowledge reaches younger generations.

Social Media influence

Social media platforms and online video-sharing services have expanded the reach of spoken stories, allowing people from different cultures to share their experiences with global audiences.

Environmental Awareness

Many Indigenous stories promote sustainable relationships with nature encouraging forest conservation; water protection; respect for wildlife and sustainable agriculture.

Education

Teachers increasingly use storytelling to make learning engaging and interactive. The stories improve listening skills; vocabulary; imagination; critical thinking and moral reasoning. They adapt to contemporary issues, making them relevant tools for advocacy and education. They are the means to sensemaking and the attribution of meaning to events occurring in everyday life.

The future will be shaped not only by technology and policy but by the stories we choose to tell, listen to and pass on. Thus, today oral narratives continue through:

- Community festivals
- Digital storytelling
- Podcasts
- Folk performances
- Museums
- Cultural preservation projects

Educational institutions and cultural organizations should document oral traditions to preserve endangered languages.

Learning Activity: 4

Bring out from your memory, one post each highlighting the ancient methods of herbal medicine; agriculture; weather prediction and food preservation examples come across by you while browsing any social media.

3.2.9 Summary

In this lesson, you have learned that Oral literature predates written literature. It is transmitted through speech, memory and performance, making it a dynamic. Oral literature reflects the collective experiences, beliefs, and values of communities rather than the work of individual authors. Its characteristics include oral transmission, collective authorship, performance, flexibility, repetition, and cultural significance. The major forms of oral literature include myths, legends, folktales, folk songs, ballads, proverbs, riddles, and epics. These forms serve educational, religious, historical, and social functions, helping communities preserve their cultural heritage.

3.2.10 KEY TERMS

- Ballad: A narrative poem or song that tells a story, often about love, adventure, or tragedy.
- Collective Authorship: A work created and shaped by a community rather than by one known individual.
- Epic: A long narrative poem or story about heroic figures and important events of a culture.
- Folk Song: A traditional song created or preserved by a community and passed down through generations.
- Folktale: A traditional story shared within a community, usually teaching a lesson or explaining human behaviour.
- Oral Literature: Literature passed from one generation to another mainly through spoken words
- Legend: A traditional story based partly on historical events or people but often containing imaginative elements.
- Myth: A traditional story that explains origins, natural events, or beliefs, often involving gods or supernatural beings.
- Oral Tradition: Knowledge, beliefs, customs, and stories transmitted orally from generation to generation.
- Proverb: A short traditional saying that expresses practical wisdom or advice.
- Riddle: A puzzling question or statement that requires clever thinking to discover its answer.

- Storytelling: The art of communicating a story through spoken words, actions, and expressions.
- Verbal Art: Creative use of spoken or written language to express ideas, emotions, or stories.

3.2.11 Self Assessment Questions

3.2.11.1 Multiple Choice Questions

Choose the Correct Answer

1. Which of the following is not a form of oral literature?
A. Folktale B. Myth C. Research article D. Folk song
2. Which of the following is a common example of an oral narrative?
A. A novel B. A folktale C. A dictionary
D. A research paper
3. Oral narratives are primarily transmitted through:
A. Printing presses B. Television
C. Spoken communication D. Email
4. Which feature is commonly found in oral narratives?
A. Complex scientific formulas
B. Repetition and rhythmic expressions
C. Mathematical equations D. Technical diagrams
5. Oral narratives help preserve:
A. Cultural traditions and values B. Weather forecasts
C. Business contracts D. Computer programs

(Answers: 1. C. Research article; 2. B. Folktale; 3. C. Spoken communication; 4. B. Repetition and rhythmic expressions; 5. A. Cultural traditions and values)

3.2.11.2 Short-Answer Questions

1. Define an oral narrative.
2. What are the main characteristics of oral narratives?
3. Name any four types of oral narratives.
4. Why are oral narratives important in preserving culture?

5. What is the role of a storyteller in oral narratives?
6. What moral values can people learn from oral narratives?

3.2.11.3 Long-Answer Questions

1. Explain the meaning, characteristics, and significance of oral narratives with suitable examples.
2. Discuss the different types of oral narratives, such as myths, legends, folktales, fables, and epics.
3. Describe the role of oral narratives in preserving the cultural heritage and traditions of a community.
4. Compare and contrast oral narratives and written narratives, highlighting their similarities and differences.
5. Explain the challenges faced in preserving oral narratives in the modern digital age and suggest ways to safeguard them.
6. Discuss the relevance of oral narratives in contemporary society and explain why they should continue to be preserved and promoted.

3.2.11.4 Case Study

Identify one oral tradition from your locality.

Complete the following table.

Question	Your Answer
Name of the tradition	
Community	
Occasion	
Purpose	
Values communicated	

3.2.12 Study Guide

At the end of this section:

- Conceptualize the meaning and scope of oral literature.
- Discuss its historical development.
- Identify different genres of oral literature.
- Appreciate its role in preserving culture and identity.
- Compare myths, tales, legends, and folklore.

- Evaluate the social functions of oral literature.
- Understand the diversity of oral traditions in India and the world.
- Recognise oral literature as an important form of intangible cultural heritage.
- Identify examples of oral literature from local communities.
- Compare oral traditions of different regions.

3.2.13 References

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Lesson 3.3 - Oral Narratives: Myths

3.3.0 Learning Outcomes

After studying this section, learners will be able to:

- Define myths and distinguish them from other forms of oral literature.
- Explain the origin and characteristics of myths.
- Classify myths according to their themes and functions.
- Analyse the social, religious, and cultural significance of myths.
- Appreciate representative myths from India.

3.3.1 Introduction

Studying myths helps us appreciate the history, imagination, and beliefs of different societies. They explain the origin of the world, nature, or human life. Myths were originally shared through oral storytelling. They help people understand natural events and life's mysteries. Myths teach moral lessons or explain important traditions. They are an important part of a community's cultural heritage. This lesson provides an overview of concept of myths, characteristics, forms, functions, themes and the contemporary relevance of myths with society.

3.3.2 Meaning of Myth

Myths are sacred or religious narratives that explain the origins of something, naturally occurring phenomena, human life, cultural practices, or religious beliefs. They usually involve gods, goddesses, supernatural beings, ancestors, or heroic figures. Heroes and supernatural beings are used to convey moral, spiritual lessons and fundamental truth about existence. Myths are the most complex form of oral narrative for an outsider of a particular civilisation to understand. Without the necessary context, it can be difficult to understand how a story came to be. Unlike ordinary stories, myths are closely associated with religion, ritual, and cultural identity. They seek to answer profound questions such as:

- How was the world created?
- Why do humans die?

- Where did fire come from?
- Why are certain animals or plants considered sacred?
- How did a community or nation originate?

Although myths may not be historically verifiable, they reveal the values, beliefs, and worldview of the people who tell them.

3.3.3 Definitions of Myth

Different scholars have interpreted myths from various perspectives.

Bronisław Malinowski, a social anthropologist, viewed myth as a "living reality" that supports social institutions and religious practices. According to him, myths justify customs and provide authority for cultural traditions.

Mircea Eliade, a historian of religions, regarded myths as sacred stories that describe events occurring in a primordial time. For Eliade, myths explain how the world and human institutions came into existence.

Joseph Campbell, a comparative mythologist, argued that myths are universal narratives reflecting shared human experiences. He believed that myths provide symbolic guidance for understanding life, growth, conflict, and transformation.

According to Levi-Strauss, Myth is a legacy of a certain form of story from oral tradition that tells of gods, goddesses, first humans, animals, and so on based on a story the logical scheme contained in the myth and which allows us to integrate all the problems that need to be solved in a systematic construction.

The above definitions demonstrate that myths are more than fictional tales. They are symbolic narratives that shape cultural identity and human understanding.

3.3.4 Evolution of Myths

The term Myth is derived from the Greek word 'muthos', means anything uttered by word of mouth. The Greeks used 'muthos' to mean fiction. To Plato, 'muthos' denotes, "Something not wholly lacking truth but for the most part fictitious".

Myths originated in ancient societies long before written records emerge. Early communities questioned and sought explanations for natural

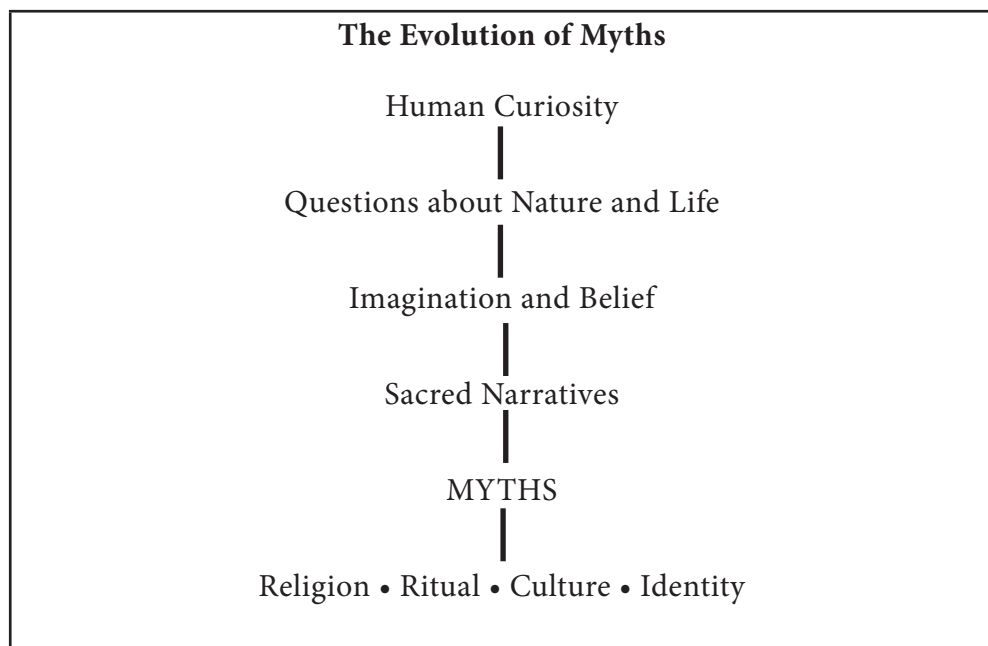
events and mysteries that they could not understand through scientific knowledge.

Questions about lightning, thunder, rainfall, earthquakes, eclipses, god, birth, death, disease and the changing seasons inspired imaginative explanations for various naturally occurring phenomena, human life, cultural practices, or religious beliefs. Over time, these explanations became sacred stories transmitted orally from generation to generation.

Myths might also have emerged from the way in which people try to understand:

- The relationship between humans and nature
- The origin of social institutions
- Moral values and ethical behaviour
- Religious rituals and ceremonies
- Community identity and ancestry

As societies evolved over time, myths became an integral part in every aspect of human life such as cultural traditions, literature, art, music, theatre, religious practices, etc. The following chart depicts this evolution:



3.3.5 Characteristics of Myths

Ten Characteristics of a Myth - Adapted from “What is a Myth?” by Mary Magoulick are as follows:

1. A myth is a story that is, or was considered, a true explanation of the natural world and how it came to be.

2. Characters are often non-human and are typically gods, goddesses, supernatural beings or mystical “fist people.”
3. Setting is typically ancient, or prior to the time when actual records were kept. Myths are typically set in a world very similar to our own, but with supernatural monsters or areas.
4. The plot of a myth may take place between a supernatural world and our present-day world. Myths do this to highlight the basic human behaviours that are essential in any setting.
5. Myths possess events that bend or break natural laws. This is often done to magnify the “super-naturalness” of the mythical world.
6. Promotes “Social Action”—myths try to tell people how to act and live. Core values such as individualism, family and community are often instilled in mythical heroes.
7. Myths have sense of mystery, or the unknown.
8. Dualities (or complete opposites such as night/day, good/evil) often play important roles in the plot of a myth.
9. Myths often have an emphasis on language. Mythical heroes are often sophisticated storytellers.
10. Myths are often metaphoric—that is, myths are created to comment or analyse a real-world event. Real world questions that myths often attempt to answer are:
 - Why are we here?
 - Who are we?
 - Why are we living?
 - What is our purpose?

Learning Activity: 1

Research the cultural background and origin of a selected myth.

3.3.6 Classification of Myths

Myths can be classified according to the themes they explore. There are many types of myths. A myth may fall into more than one category also. While different scholars propose different classifications, the following categories are widely recognised.

A. Creation Myths (Cosmogonic Myths)

Cosmogonic myths answer the fundamental question: "How did the universe and the world begin?" It explains the origin of the earth, sky, heavens, humanity and all living beings. It establishes the beginning of cosmic order from chaos or nothingness. It is the foundation for many religious and cultural views. For example, Hiranyagarbha (Hindu Tradition): The universe emerges from the "Golden Egg" (Hiranyagarbha), from which creation begins.

Learning Activity: 2

Read a creation myth and arrange the events in chronological order. Understand how different cultures explain the origin of the world.

B. Origin Myths (Etiological Myths)

A myth explains how particular customs, beliefs, animals, plants, mountains, rivers, or social practices came into existence is known as Etiological Myth. It answers questions such as "Why does this exist?" or "How did this begin?" before scientific or historical explanations were available. It connects a present-day phenomenon with a legendary event. It teaches a moral or cultural lesson.

Examples

- Myths explaining the sacredness of the River Ganga.
- Tribal myths describing the origin of clans.

Learning Activity: 3

Investigate what a myth says about the origin of a particular custom, place, animal, or tradition.

C. Hero Myths

A Myth which celebrates extraordinary individuals who overcome challenges for the welfare of society is called Hero Myth. It describes the adventure or journey of a hero.

It tells a traditional story about extraordinary individuals who undertake dangerous quests, overcome great challenges and often protect people. These heroes usually possess exceptional courage, strength, wisdom, or divine assistance and battles against monsters, evil forces, or

difficult obstacles with the help from gods, magical objects, or loyal companions. A moral lesson about courage, perseverance, sacrifice, or justice is learnt. For example, Stories of Rama and Krishna and Greek myths about Hercules.

D. Nature Myths

A myth that explains natural phenomena such as seasons, the sun, moon, rivers, mountains, storms and the origin of plants and animals is known as nature myth. Such myths helped communities understand their environment. It reflects the relationship between humans and the natural world. It emphasized respect for nature and its forces. For example, Indra and Vritra (Hindu/Vedic Mythology): The god Indra defeats the serpent Vritra, releasing the waters and bringing rain, rivers, and fertility to the earth.

Learning Activity: 4

Identify a natural phenomenon in a myth and explain how the myth accounts for it. Understand how myths explain natural events.

E. Eschatological Myths

A myth concerning with the end of the world or the destiny of humanity. Eschatology the doctrine of the last things. It was originally a Western term, referring to Jewish, Christian and Muslim beliefs about the end of history, the resurrection of the dead, the Last Judgment. It is stories or beliefs about the end of the world, the destiny of humanity, or the final transformation of the universe. It explains what happens at the end of time and may include themes such as judgment, destruction, renewal, or rebirth. It reinforces moral values, ethical behaviour and offers hope for justice or renewal. For example. Kalki (Hinduism): The final avatar of Vishnu, Kalki is prophesied to appear at the end of the Kali Yuga, defeat evil, and usher in a new age of righteousness.

F. Ancestral Myths

These narratives explain the origins of particular community, clan, tribe, nation, or royal family by tracing their descent from a revered ancestor, hero, deity, or supernatural being. It provides answers to questions such as "**Who are our ancestors?**" and "**Where did our people**

come from?" Many tribal groups in India trace their ancestry to sacred animals, birds, mountains, or supernatural ancestors.

Manu (Hindu Tradition) – regarded as the first human and the ancestor of humankind after surviving a great flood. Adam and Eve (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) – described as the first humans and the ancestors of all humanity.

G. Chthonic myth

It is a myth about the underworld and the hidden powers of the earth. It explains death, rebirth, fertility and the cycle of life. For example, Sita Returning to the Earth: At the end of the Ramayana, Sita calls upon Mother Earth and is taken back into the earth. It symbolizes the earth as the source of life and the final place of return.

3.3.7 Functions of Myths

Myths perform many societal functions. Most important among them are discussed below:

1. Explaining the Unknown

Myths provided explanations for mysterious events well before scientific knowledge developed. For example, communities interpreted eclipses, floods, storms and earthquakes through mythological narratives.

2. Preserving Religious Beliefs

Myths preserve religious practices by reinforcing sacred rituals, religious festivals, pilgrimage sites, worship practices, etc

3. Strengthening Cultural Identity

Common stories create a sense of belonging and continuity. Communities recognise themselves most often through shared myths and strengthened their cultural identity

4. Teaching Moral Values

We learn many lessons relating to moral values such as honesty, loyalty, courage, justice, compassion, sacrifice, etc., from the teaching of myths.

5. Retention of Collective Memory

Myths facilitate to preserve a community's understanding of its past, ancestors and cultural heritage.

6. Explaining Social Institutions

Many social institutions such as kingship, marriage, social hierarchy, cultural rituals, community festivals are being understood through the explanations offered by many myths.

Learning Activity: 5

Select one myth from your region and answer the following:

Name of the Myth:

Theme:

Cultural message:

Main characters:

Morality:

Relationship with nature:

3.3.8 Important sources of Indian Mythological Traditions

India has one of the richest mythological traditions in the world. Indian myths have developed through various religious, linguistic, regional and tribal communities. They are preserved through sacred texts, oral narratives, folk performances, songs, rituals, paintings, sculptures and festivals.

Indian myths are not limited to written scriptures. Many communities preserve their own versions of creation stories, ancestral narratives, and hero tales through oral storytelling.

Important sources of Indian myths include:

- The Vedas
- The Upanishads
- The Ramayana
- The Mahabharata
- The Puranas
- Regional folk traditions
- Tribal oral narratives

These narratives continue to influence Indian society, art, literature, and cultural practices.

3.3.9 Major Themes in Indian Myths

Indian myths commonly explore themes such as:

1. Creation and Cosmic Order

Many Indian creation myths describe the formation of the universe from cosmic forces. **Example:** The concept of **Brahma as the creator** represents the idea of cosmic creation and order.

2. Good versus Evil

In Indian mythology there is the conflict between forces of righteousness and injustice. **Examples:** Rama's battle against Ravana and Krishna's guidance to the Pandavas in the Mahabharata.

3. Divine-Human Relationship

Many Indian myths explore interactions between gods and humans. Gods may appear among humans to restore balance and guide society. **Example:** The concept of Vishnu avatars represents divine intervention during periods of crisis.

4. Nature and Sacred Ecology

Indian myths often connect natural elements with spirituality. For example, rivers are considered as sacred beings, mountains as divine spaces and animals connected with deities. These beliefs actually earn respect for nature.

3.3.10 Contemporary Relevance of Myths

Myths were originated thousands of years ago but they continue to influence modern society. Myths are deeply connected with social life. Even today, mythological themes continue to inspire contemporary literature, visual arts, and popular culture, demonstrating the enduring relevance of these ancient narratives. They influence literature, art, music, architecture, festivals and rituals. Temple sculptures depict mythological stories. Classical dances such as Bharatanatyam and Kathak interpret mythological themes. Festivals such as Diwali, Durga Puja, Janmashtami and Onam incorporate mythological narratives into rituals and celebrations. Mythological themes remain popular in films, television series, and animation. Artists use mythological stories in painting, sculpture, dance and theatre. Myths provide insights into human emotions, fears, dreams, and social behaviour. Thus, myths are not merely ancient stories but they are living cultural resources.

3.3.11 Summary

Myths are sacred narratives that explain origins, beliefs and cultural practices emerged from various attempts made by the society to understand the world and its mysteries. They are characterised by sacredness, symbolism, supernatural characters, oral transmission and collective authorship. They can be classified into creation, origin, hero, nature, eschatological and ancestral myths. Though they are ancient stories, they continue to influence cultural identity, artistic expression, and community life.

3.3.12 Key Terms

- Myths: Traditional stories that explain the origin of the world, nature, or human life and reflect a culture's beliefs.
- Collective Authorship: The creation of stories or traditions by a community over time rather than by a single individual.
- Cosmic Order: The natural and harmonious arrangement of the universe according to cultural or religious beliefs.
- Cosmogonic Myths: Myths that explain how the universe, the earth, or the world was created.
- Supernaturalness: The quality of involving powers, beings, or events beyond the laws of nature.
- Eschatological Myths: Myths that describe the end of the world or the final destiny of humanity.
- Etiological Myths: Myths that explain the origin or cause of natural features, customs, or traditions.
- Oral Transmission: The process of passing stories, beliefs, and traditions from one generation to another by word of mouth.

3.3.13 Self-Assessment Questions

Multiple Choice Questions

3.3.13.1 Choose the correct answer

1. Myths mainly explain:

- a) Scientific experiments b) Origins and beliefs
- c) Economic systems d) Political documents

2. Which of the following is not generally considered a characteristic of myths?

- a) Sacred significance b) Supernatural characters
- c) Scientific experimentation d) Symbolic meaning

3. A myth involving the origin of the universe is called:

- a) Hero myth b) Creation myth c) Folk song
- d) Legend

4. Prometheus belongs to:

- a) Indian mythology b) Greek mythology
- c) Egyptian mythology d) Norse mythology

5. Tribal myths often preserve:

- a) Industrial knowledge b) Ecological and cultural knowledge
- c) Modern technology d) Scientific formulas

(**Answers:** 1. b) Origins and beliefs; 2. c) Scientific experimentation; 3. b) Creation myth; 4. b) Greek mythology; 5. b) Ecological and cultural knowledge)

3.3.13.2 Short Answer Questions

1. Define myth.
2. Explain two characteristics of myths.
3. What are creation myths?
4. How do myths preserve cultural identity?

3.3.13.3 Long Answer Questions

1. Discuss myths as a form of cultural communication.
2. Explain the major classifications of myths with examples.
3. Compare Indian myths with myths from other cultures.
4. Discuss the continuing relevance of myths in contemporary society.

3.3.13.4 Case Study: The Story of Ganga's Descent

One of the best-known Indian myths is the story of the descent of the River Ganga from heaven to earth. According to the narrative, King Bhagiratha performed severe penance to bring the sacred river down to earth for the salvation of his ancestors. Since the force of the descending

river would have destroyed the earth, Lord Shiva received the river in his matted locks and released it gently.

Cultural Significance

This myth:

- Explains the sacred status of the River Ganga.
- Highlights perseverance and devotion.
- Illustrates the relationship between nature and spirituality.
- Continues to influence religious practices and pilgrimages.

3.3.14 Study Guide

- Identify the symbolic meaning of the myth rather than merely summarising the story. Myth = Sacred narrative + Cultural meaning + Symbolic explanation.
- Myths are not merely stories but they represent collective beliefs of the community. Every culture has its myths explaining creation, identity and human existence. Consider how the narrative reflects the beliefs, environment, or values of the community that preserves it.
- Make a comparative study of myths to identify diversity and human experiences.

3.3.15 References

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Lesson 3.4 - Oral Narratives: Folklore

3.4.1 Learning Objectives

After studying this section, learners will be able to:

- Define folklore and explain its scope as a field of cultural study.
- Identify major elements and forms of folklore.
- Understand the relationship between folklore and community identity.
- Analyse Indian and global examples of folklore.
- Explain the role of folklore in preserving cultural heritage.
- Appreciate folklore as a living form of cultural communication.

3.4.1 Introduction to Folklore

This lesson would provide an insight into the concepts of Folklore. From time immemorial folklore has served as a vibrant part of the social and cultural environments of society and today, it is considered one of the most significant aspects of cultural and social history. When we learn about folklore, we find that it is not only a collection of tales, beliefs, customs, sayings, art and wisdom but also reflection of the life of an entire generation. Therefore, folklore was recognized as a way of passing down inheritance. The purpose of this lesson is to describe what is folklore, why it is passed from one generation to the next and how its tradition influences modern life.

3.4.2 Meaning of Folklore

The word folklore was first introduced in 1846 by the British scholar William John Thoms, who used it to describe the traditional knowledge of ordinary people. The term combines two words:

- Folk – people or community
- Lore – knowledge, learning, or wisdom

Thus, folklore literally means the knowledge of the people. The term folklore refers to the traditional knowledge, beliefs, customs, practices, expressions, and artistic creations shared by a particular community. It

includes stories, songs, dances, rituals, proverbs, crafts, festivals, beliefs, and performances that are transmitted from one generation to another.

3.4.3 Definitions of Folklore

A. William John Thoms

Thoms used the term folklore to refer to the traditional beliefs, customs, and stories preserved among common people.

B. Alan Dundes

Alan Dundes defined folklore as the traditional expressive culture shared by a particular group of people.

C. George Laurence Gomme

Folklore is the traditional knowledge and practices of a community that are passed from one generation to another.

D. William Bascom

Folklore includes forms of traditional knowledge and expression such as myths, legends, folktales, proverbs, riddles, and songs.

E. Richard M. Dorson

Folklore is the traditional knowledge and cultural expressions that are passed on informally within a community.

These definitions highlight three important features: Tradition; Group identity and Expression

3.4.4 Nature of Folklore

The nature of folklore refers to the basic characteristics and qualities that make folklore an important part of culture and society.

A. Traditional: Folklore is inherited and passed from one generation to another through spoken words, storytelling, songs, proverbs and sayings.

B. Collective: Folklore belongs to a group or community rather than to one individual.

C. Dynamic: Folklore changes over time as people adapt traditional stories and practices to new situations according to social conditions.

D. Cultural: It reflects the customs, beliefs, values, traditions and lifestyle of a particular community.

E. Regional: Folklore often differs from one region or community to another and reflects local environments and traditions.

F. Educational: Folklore teaches moral lessons, social values, customs, and knowledge to younger generations.

G. Entertaining: Stories, songs, riddles, jokes, and legends provide enjoyment while also conveying cultural ideas.

H. Symbolic: Folklore often uses symbols, animals, heroes, supernatural characters, and events to express deeper meanings.

I. Preservative: Folklore helps preserve a community's cultural heritage, collective memory, language, and identity.

Folklore is traditional, collective, oral, dynamic, cultural, and educational. It connects people with their past while continuing to develop according to the changing needs of society.

3.4.5 Classification of Folklore

Folklore may be classified into different categories. The following is a simple classification for academic purpose:

A. Verbal Folklore: Traditional form, expressed mainly through words and speech.

- Folktales
- Myths
- Legends
- Fairy tales
- Fables
- Proverbs
- Riddles
- Folk songs and
- Ballads

B. Folk Beliefs: Traditional ideas and beliefs shared by members of a community consisting the following:

- Superstitions
- Beliefs about spirits and supernatural beings
- Beliefs about luck and bad luck
- Traditional beliefs about nature
- Omens and signs

C. Folk Customs and Practices: Traditional activities followed by a community in everyday life and on special occasions.

- Marriage
- Birth and naming ceremonies
- Funeral practices
- Agricultural customs
- Food traditions
- Community celebrations

D. Folk Rituals and Festivals: Traditional ceremonies and celebrations connected with religious, social, agricultural, or seasonal events.

- Religious rituals
- Harvest festivals
- Seasonal celebrations
- Worship practices
- Community ceremonies

E. Material Folklore: It includes traditional objects and physical forms created and used by a community.

- Traditional clothing
- Jewellery
- Handicrafts
- Household objects
- Traditional houses
- Tools and agricultural implements
- Toys and decorations

F. Folk Performing Arts: Traditional forms of artistic performance.

- Folk dance
- Folk music
- Traditional theatre

- Puppet shows
- Storytelling performances
- Traditional games

To conclude, folklore includes traditional stories, beliefs, customs, rituals, material culture, and performing arts, all of which preserve the cultural identity and heritage of a community.

Learning Activity: 1

Name folk stories, songs, sayings, riddles, customs, or traditions you know. Group them create a concept map showing what you think folklore includes.

3.4.6 Folktales

Tales are stories that transmitted through spoken narration and preserved through collective memory. They include imaginary events, realistic situations, supernatural elements, humour, adventure, or moral lessons reflecting the imagination, experiences, and values of the communities that create and preserve them. They are closely connected with everyday life. A folktale usually has no known author and changes gradually through repeated narration. Folktales have a charm that is hard to resist, they transport us to magical realms, introduce us to extraordinary characters and confront us with challenges that mirror our own struggles.

3.4.6.1 Classification of Folktales:

Folktales can be classified into different categories based on their themes, characters, and purposes.

A. Animal Tales: Animal tales feature animals as central characters. These animals often represent human qualities

B. Fairy Tales: A fairy tale is a story intended for children featuring fanciful and wondrous characters such as elves, goblins, wizards, and even, but not necessarily, fairies.

C. Trickster Tales: Trickster tales feature clever characters who use intelligence to overcome difficulties.

D. Moral Tales: Moral tales teach ethical lessons through stories encouraging truthfulness; compassion and responsibility.

E. Hero Tales: They are stories of an adventure that describe extraordinary individuals who overcome challenges.

F. Ghost and Supernatural Tales: Ghost stories have been a staple of human storytelling for a long time. There's something about the unknown and the supernatural that tempers our curiosity and sends shivers down our spines.

G. Tribal Folktales: Tribal communities across India preserve rich collections of folktales. Examples include stories from Gond communities, Santhal communities, Bhil communities and Naga communities having common themes like relationship with nature, community cooperation and respect for ancestors.

Learning Activity: 2

Take a folktale from your own culture or another culture. Identify the characters, setting, plot, conflict, moral and cultural values represented in the story.

3.4.7 Cultural Significance of Folklore

Folklore plays an important role in preserving and communicating culture. Folklore not only provide a symbolic framework of the collective memory but also encompassing both historical and contemporary legends. It also connects the modern globalized world with the local community. It demonstrates the visible ability of the community to conserve (and sometimes consume) the images of its past. Folklore plays a multifaceted role in society, impacting various aspects of human life. Let us examine some key areas where folklore has significant influence:

A. Cultural Identity

Folklore helps communities to define who they are and where they come from. It fosters a sense of belonging and unity among individuals. By preserving and practicing their folklore, communities can maintain a strong connection to their cultural identity.

B. Education and Transmission of Knowledge

Folklore serves as an educational tool, transmitting knowledge and wisdom from one generation to the next. Through folktales, proverbs and songs, young people learn important life lessons, cultural values, and

historical events. Further, Folklore teaches social values such as ethics, social responsibilities and cultural practices. Many folk traditions contain knowledge about environmental protection also.

C. Social Cohesion and Community Bonding

By participating in shared traditions and practices like festivals, dances and communal activities people bind together and a sense of unity and belongingness is felt by people. Thus, folklore serves as a powerful tool for social integration and solidarity.

D.Preservation of Cultural Heritage

Folklore is a vessel for preserving cultural heritage, ensuring that traditional practices, beliefs, and customs by passing down from one generation to another and maintain connection to their roots. This preservation of cultural heritage allows societies to celebrate their past, embrace their present, and shape their future.

E.Inspiration for Art and Creativity

Folklore has long been a source of inspiration for artists, writers, musicians, and filmmakers as they provide rich narratives and compelling characters that captivate audiences. These timeless stories fueling the creative imagination and giving birth to new works of art.

Learning Activity: 3

Interview an older family or community member about a traditional story, proverb, song, belief, custom or festival. Present what you learned in a report.

3.4.8 Preservation of Folklore in The Modern Age

Rapid social change, urbanisation and globalisation have affected traditional folklore.

Many traditions face challenges, in preserving their folklore, such as decline of local languages, reduced community storytelling, migration and changing lifestyles. However, it is the responsibility of the community to preserve and pass it on to the next generation. In this direction, many attempts have been made to preserve the folklore through modern methods. How it can be done is being explained below:

3.4.8.1 Methods of Preservation

Practitioners in folklore preservation employ a variety of methods to capture and safeguard these short-lived cultural narratives. These include:

A. Recording and Archiving: Utilizing audiovisual technology to record oral traditions and performances and then storing these in archives.

B. Documentation: Compiling written records of stories, interviews with tradition bearers and descriptions of rituals and ceremonies.

C. Education and Dissemination: Integrating folklore into educational curricula to familiarize new generations with traditional narratives; using media to broaden outreach.

D. Digital Preservation: Employing digital tools to not only archive but also to disseminate folklore globally, using platforms like online databases, podcasts and eBooks is another method of preservation.

E. Community Involvement: The most effective preservation occurs when communities continue practising their traditions. Engaging local communities in the process of preserving their own folklore, often empowering them to take the lead in these efforts.

F. Legislation and Policy Making: Working with governments to enact laws and policies that protect and promote folklore as part of the national or ethnic heritage.

Learning Activity: 4

Select one traditional item such as a folktale, proverb, folk song, riddle, traditional custom and create a digital presentation, poster, podcast, or short video documenting it.

3.4.9 Summary

Folklore represents the traditional knowledge and expressions of communities. It includes verbal, customary, material, and performing traditions. Major elements include folk songs, dances, proverbs, riddles, theatre, and crafts. Folklore preserves cultural identity, historical memory, language, and indigenous knowledge. Indian folklore reflects the country's cultural diversity through regional and tribal traditions. Modern documentation and digital technologies play an important role in safeguarding folklore.

3.4.10 Self-Assessment Questions

13.10.1 Multiple Choice Questions

1. The word folklore means:
 - a) Written history b) Knowledge of the people
 - c) Scientific knowledge d) Political knowledge
2. Proverbs are examples of:
 - a) Material culture b) Verbal folklore c) Scientific literature
 - d) Modern media
3. Warli art belongs to:
 - a) Maharashtra b) Punjab c) Assam d) Kerala
4. Folk dances are usually connected with:
 - a) Community events b) Laboratory experiments
 - c) Business activities d) Written exams
5. Folktales are mainly transmitted through:
 - a) Printing b) Oral tradition c) Scientific research
 - d) Newspapers
6. Panchatantra mainly contains:
 - a) Historical documents b) Animal tales
 - c) Religious rituals d) Scientific explanations
7. How do folktales contribute to cultural identity?
 - a) By preserving shared traditions and beliefs
 - b). By replacing local languages
 - c) By discouraging storytelling d) By eliminating customs

(**Answers:** 1. b) Knowledge of the people; 2. b) Verbal folklore; 3. a) Maharashtra; 4. a) Community events; 5. b) Oral tradition; 6. b) Animal tales; 7. a) By preserving shared traditions and beliefs)

3.4.10.2 Short Answer Questions

1. Define folklore and folktale
2. Explain the major categories of folklore.
3. Mention four characteristics of folklore.

4. What is the cultural importance of folk songs?
5. Describe the role of folk theatre.
6. Explain how folklore preserves indigenous knowledge.
7. How are folktales traditionally passed from one generation to another?
8. Explain the cultural significance of Panchatantra.
9. What are trickster tales?
10. How do folktales preserve language?

3.4.10.3 Long Answer Questions

1. Discuss folklore as a medium of cultural communication.
2. Explain different elements of folklore with examples.
3. Analyse the role of folklore in preserving community identity.
4. Discuss the challenges and methods of preserving folklore in the modern world.
5. Explain the meaning and main characteristics of folktales.
6. Compare Indian folktales with global folktale traditions.
7. How do folktales contribute to the development of cultural identity? Explain.

3.4.10.4 Case Study

Field Study Project

Collect one example of folklore from your region.

Prepare a report including:

1. Name of the tradition
2. Community associated with it
3. Type of folklore
4. Occasion of performance
5. Cultural meaning
6. Current status

3.4.11 Key Terms

- Folklore: The beliefs, customs, stories, songs, practices and knowledge shared by a community.
- Folk Culture: The way of life, customs, beliefs and practices of a particular community.

- Folk Song: A traditional song passed from one generation to another that expresses the feelings, experiences and culture of a community.
- Folk Dance: A traditional dance that represents the customs, celebrations and cultural identity of a community.
- Folktales: Traditional stories passed down from one generation to another, often teaching moral lessons and cultural values.
- Folk Theatre: A traditional form of drama or performance that reflects the stories, beliefs, customs, and social life of a community.
- Cultural Identity: A sense of belonging based on shared traditions, language, beliefs, values, and customs.
- Intangible Cultural Heritage: The traditional knowledge, skills, expressions, customs and practices that communities recognize as their cultural heritage.

3.4.12 Study Guide

Remember:

Folklore = Traditional Knowledge + Community Expression + Cultural Memory.

Important ideas:

- Folklore belongs to communities.
- It changes over time.
- It communicates values and beliefs.
- It preserves languages and traditions.
- It connects past generations with the present.
- It is of different categories

3.4.13 References

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Lesson 3.5 - Introduction To The Tribal Cultures Of India

3.5.0 Learning Objectives

After studying this unit, students will be able to:

- Define tribal culture and explain its major features.
- Identify major tribal communities of India.
- The relationship between tribal communities and nature.
- The importance of indigenous knowledge systems.
- Identify examples of tribal folklore.

3.5.1 Introduction

India is home to one of the world's most diverse collections of indigenous communities.

The study of tribal cultures is important for understanding India's cultural plurality. This lesson explores the meaning and characteristics of tribal cultures, their geographical distribution, languages, arts, rituals, festivals, belief systems and oral traditions. It also examines selected tribal communities such as the Gond, Santhal, Bhil, Toda, Khasi, and Naga communities.

3.5.2 Meaning of Tribe

A tribe is a historic class division in which individuals are related by societal, cultural, religious, or blood connections and share a set of norms and accents. According to the Imperial Gazetteer of India, a tribe is a collection of families bearing a common name, speaking a common dialect, and occupying or professing to occupy a common territory.

3.5.3 Characteristics of Tribal Community

Essential Characteristics for a Community to be Identified as Scheduled Tribe. According to Lokur Committee (1965), the essential characteristics are:

- Indication of Primitive Traits
- Distinctive Culture

- Shyness of Contact with the Community at Large
- Geographical Isolation
- Backwardness

Key characteristics of tribal society include small, close-knit communities with strong kinship ties, a simple social structure, and a subsistence economy based on hunting, gathering, farming, or herding. They value collective decision-making, oral traditions, and a deep connection to nature and ancestral practices. The key characteristic features of tribal community are explained below:

A. Geographical Isolation: Tribal people live within a definite topography and it is a common place for all the members of a particular tribe occupying that region. They have usually a well demarcated geographical territory. They live in cluster (padas), which are generally located in remote forests and hilly areas. Now, many of them migrated to rural villages and cities and mixed with non tribal communities.

B. Endogamous Group: Tribes do not generally marry outside their tribe and marriage within the tribe is much appreciated. Marriage is based on the rule of tribal endogamy. It is viewed as a contract and there are no taboos on divorce and marriage. In recent times, inter-tribal marriages are not uncommon.

C. Egalitarian Values: The tribal social organization is based on egalitarian principles. There is no hierarchy defining social relationships. Thus, there are no institutionalized inequalities. However, in some tribes, the chief may enjoy higher social status and more authority.

D. Sense of Unity: Unless and until, a group living in a particular area and using that area as a common residence, does not possess the sense of unity, it cannot be called tribe. Sense of unity is an invariable necessity for a true tribal life. Tribal folk nurture a sense of exclusive identity.

E. Common Dialect: Each tribe has its own dialect. Members of tribal exchange their views in a common dialect. This element further strengthens their sense of unity. However, they may also use regional language to communicate outside the tribal community.

F. Distinctive Culture: They have independent traditions with respect to social customs, folklore, ecology and belief system. Common culture produces a life of homogeneity among the tribals.

G. Importance of Kinship: kinship forms the basis of tribal social organization. Most tribes are divided into exogamous clans and lineages.

3.5.4 Distribution of Tribal Communities in India

In India, tribes are found in Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar, Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Karnataka. There are around 645 tribes in India. India's tribal communities are distributed across different ecological regions. Major tribal regions include:

A. Central Indian Tribal Belt

This region contains a large concentration of tribal populations in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha and Maharashtra. Gond, Santhal, Bhil, Oraon, Munda are the important communities found in this region

B. North-Eastern Tribal Region

The North-East has exceptional cultural diversity in Nagaland, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Assam and Tripura. Important communities of this region are Naga groups, Khasi, Garo, Mizo and Bodo

C. Southern Tribal Region

Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Karnataka are the States covered under this region having communities like Toda, Irula, Kurumba, Chenchu and Koya communities.

D. Western Tribal Region

Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra are the States of this region with Bhil, Warli, Meena and Garasia communities

Learning Activity: 1

Community Research

Select one tribal community and prepare a short profile including the following points:

1. Location 2. Language
3. Traditional occupation 4. Festivals
5. Art forms 6. Oral traditions

3.5.5 Different nomenclatures for the tribals in India

A. Adivasis (Indigenous population): 'Adivasis' refers to the Indigenous population of India. They are the original inhabitants of India and have their own distinct cultures, languages, and customs. They have been living in different parts of India for centuries and have a deep understanding of the ecology and resources of their regions.

B. Scheduled Tribes (STs): The term 'Scheduled Tribes' first appeared in the Constitution of India. Article 366 (25) defined scheduled tribes as "such tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purposes of this constitution".

C. Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs): They are considered the most disadvantaged and marginalized among the tribal communities. On the recommendation of the Dhebar Commission (1973), in 1975 Government of India created a sub-category called Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs), later renamed as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs). Now there are total of 75 PVTGs spread over 17 states and one Union Territory (UT).

D. Forest dwellers: Forest dwellers refer to people who live in and around forest areas, and rely on forests for their livelihoods and well-being, including hunting and gathering, agriculture, pastoralism and non-timber forest products such as honey, medicinal plants and bamboo.

E. Nomadic and semi-nomadic: Nomadic and semi-nomadic people are communities that move from place to place, often with their herds or flocks, searching for food and water for their animals and in response to seasonal changes. Examples: Banjara, Lambadi, Raika, Rabari, and Gaddi.

Learning Activity: 2

Locate the tribal communities on an India map and identify its region, language, traditional occupation and major cultural practices.

3.5.6 Problems faced by Tribes in India

A. Loss of Control over Natural Resources: With the concepts of protected forests and national forests gaining currency, the tribals felt themselves uprooted from their cultural moorings and with no secure means of livelihood.

B. Lack of Education: Most schools lack basic infrastructure, including minimal learning materials and even minimal sanitary provisions.

C. Displacement and Rehabilitation: Acquisition of tribal land by the government for the development process of core sectors led to large scale displacement of the tribal population. The migration of these tribals to the urban areas causes psychological problems for them.

D. Problems of Health and Nutrition: Due to economic backwardness and insecure livelihood, the tribals face health problems, such as the prevalence of disease, like malaria, cholera, diarrhoea and jaundice.

E. Gender Issues: The degradation of the natural environment, particularly through the destruction of forests and a rapidly shrinking resource base, has its impact on the status of women.

F. Erosion of Identity: Increasingly, the traditional institutions and laws of tribals are coming into conflict with modern institutions which create apprehensions among the tribals about preserving their identity.

3.5.7 Constitutional Provisions for Empowerment of Tribes:

- a. Article 342 lays down that the President may by public notification, specify the tribes or tribal communities or part of or groups within tribes or tribal communities or parts which shall for the purpose of this Constitution deemed to be Scheduled Tribes.
- b. Article 164 provides for a Ministry of Tribal Welfare in each of the State of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa which have large concentration of Scheduled Tribes population.
- c. Article 244 provides for the inclusion of a Fifth Schedule in the Constitution for incorporating provisions for the administration of Scheduled Areas and Tribes of the States which have sizeable tribal population (other than those of Assam).
- d. Article 275 provides for the grant of special funds by the Union Government to State Government for promoting the welfare of Scheduled Tribes and providing them with a better administration.
- e. The government had made special provisions in the 5th and 6th schedules of the constitution for safeguarding the rights of tribal communities.

- f. The 5th schedule provides to set Tribe's Advisory Council in the Scheduled area of each state.
- g. There is a special provision for the advancement of scheduled tribes in Article 15 (4) educational and cultural protection.
- h. There is also a provision of protection for Scheduled tribes in Article 29.
- i. Article 46 has a provision to protect their educational, and economic rights and social injustice.
- j. Article 350 of the Constitution has provisions to protect the language, culture, and scripts.
- k. Article 330 reserves the seat for Scheduled tribes in Lok Sabha, Article 332 for Rajya Sabha, and Article 243 for Panchayats.

3.5.8 List of various Government Schemes:

- Pre Matric Scholarship Scheme for ST Students
- Post Matric Scholarship Scheme for ST Students
- National Overseas Scholarship for ST Students for studying abroad
- National and Fellowship Scholarship for Higher Education of ST Students
- Grants-in-aid to Voluntary Organisations Working for welfare of STs
- Strengthening Education among ST Girls in Low Literacy Districts
- Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)
- Special Central Assistance (SCA) to Tribal Sub-Scheme (TSS)
- Grants-in-aid to Tribal Research Institutes

Learning Activity: 3

Consider the government scheme 'Strengthening Education among ST Girls in Low Literacy Districts'. Analyse the effectiveness of the scheme in achieving its purposes.

3.5.9 Indian Tribal culture

Tribal culture of India, their traditions and practices interpenetrate almost all the aspects of Indian culture and civilisation. India's tribal population is as different as the country itself.

3.5.9.1 Customs and Traditions of Indian Tribal People:

- The speciality of the Indian tribes lies in their customs, cultures, beliefs and the harmony in which they survive in unanimity with nature. Tribal living perfectly portrays a well-balanced background.
- Sentinelese tribe of Andaman: They are fond of buckets, specifically red buckets.
- Jarawa Tribe of Andaman: They are still rooted in their tribal customs and traditions. They enjoy fish, pigs and other animals but wouldn't touch a deer as they consider deer sacred and they also change the names of their children post puberty. There is a detailed ritual held to celebrate, in which a boy has to search for a wild pig and present it to everyone in the village and a girl is rubbed in clay and pig oil.
- Chenchus in Andhra Pradesh: They speak a dialect of Telugu language known as 'Chenchu'. Chenchu youths are free to marry whoever they want to and they agree to the divorce, and widows as well are approved to remarry.
- Bhil tribe: There is lot of liberty given to Bhil women and they are treated equally. They practice polygamy where a woman is allowed to remarry and have several partners after her first marriage.
- Santhals of Eastern India in West Bengal, Odisha, Bihar, Jharkhand, and Assam speak several languages other than 'Santhali'. Their written script is new and was developed as just as 1925. They have no temples and no idols as they worship the local gods and spirits.
- Mundas have received success in the fields of sports, politics, literature, etc. Ram Dayal Munda, a member of Munda tribe, has been awarded with the Padma Shri award also.
- Khasi tribe of Meghalaya speak Khasi language. They are matrilineal clan and children's surnames are based on mother's family. It is the mother who succeeds to the property, not the father. In case of a divorce, the woman has absolute freedom. Her choice cannot be questioned and she possesses the children and properties.
- Gonds are the tribal community of the central India. They have been influenced by the Hindus and for the long time have been practicing different Hindu rituals. Angami tribe of Nagaland are quite popular for their woodcraft and art work.

3.5.9.2 Religion of Indian Tribal People

- There are different religions like Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam are under the pressure of cultural merging in India. Tribal groups in Himalayas are also affected by both Hinduism and Buddhism in the late 20th century.

3.5.9.3 Food Culture of Indian Tribal People

- The traditional foods consumed by Indian tribal people are very well connected to almost all the aspects of their socio-cultural, spiritual life and health. Traditional food, wild fruits, roots and tubers, yams, green vegetables, spinach, fishes, crabs, snails, ants, honey, etc. are in the list of food of Indian tribal people.
- Tribes from Odisha eat 'ragi ka halwa', 'ragi porridge', 'organic rice and dalma' and 'ragi pakora'.
- Bhil tribe eat 'kachra sabji', 'chancch' and 'mirchi ki chatni' etc. For food, Indian tribal people are totally reliant on plants and chiefly have a preference on raw fruits.
- In North - East India, soybean based fermented food is quite popular like 'bekang', 'aagya', 'peron namsing', 'yanni perung', 'chukchoro', 'bari', 'kinema', 'hawaizaar', 'hakhu mata/akhuni', 'axoni' etc. Bamboo based ethnic foods are also quite popular in North - East India like 'hikhu', 'hiring', 'hithyi', 'ekung', 'lungseij', 'godhak', 'gundruk' etc. Tree bean based ethnic foods of North - East Indian tribes are 'yongchak', 'iromba' etc.

3.5.9.4 Festivals of Indian Tribal People

- Indian tribal festivals have been an element of the structure of tribal India for centuries. Central Indian tribal festivals include 'Madai festival', 'Bhagoriya festival', 'Tribal Dussehra' of Bastar, religious festival of Karma, festival of 'Nagaj'. Northern Indian tribal festivals include 'Mim kut', 'Sekrenyi festival', 'Tsukhenyi festival', 'Aoling', 'Monyu', 'Moatsu festival', 'Amongmong festival', 'Ngada festival', 'Hornbill festival', 'Sekrenyi' etc.
- Eastern Indian tribal festivals include 'Bali Jatra', 'Karama festival', 'Chaitra Parva', 'Kedu festival', 'Mage Parab', 'Bohaggiyo Bishu', 'Sarhul' etc. Southern Indian tribal festivals include 'Holi', 'Samakka' festival and so on.

- Tribal people generally cling firmly to their identity, despite external influences that had threatened tribal culture, especially after the post-independence chaotic period.

Learning Activity: 4

Create a poster, digital presentation, short video or photo story about ways to preserve tribal languages, arts, folklore, traditions and cultural knowledge.

3.5.10 Summary

India has one of the most diverse tribal communities globally. A tribe is a historical, social class division in which humans are linked by societal, cultural, religious, or family ties and share a set of conventions and customs. The Indian government's strategies speed up tribal communities' progress. Effective utilization of the resources allocated by the governments could witness the rapid empowerment of tribal communities in India

3.5.11 Key Terms

- **Tribes:** A social group of people who share common traditions, culture, language, ancestry and a sense of community.
- **Scheduled Tribes:** A tribal community officially recognized by the Government of India under the Constitution as a Scheduled Tribe.
- **Geographical Isolation:** A situation in which a community lives in a remote or difficult-to-access area with limited contact with other communities.
- **Endogamous Group:** A social group in which members traditionally marry within their own community or group.
- **Egalitarian Values:** Beliefs that emphasize equality, fairness, and equal respect among members of a community.
- **Kinship:** The system of social relationships based on family ties, marriage or common ancestry.
- **Adivasis:** Indigenous tribal communities of India who have distinct cultures, traditions, languages and ways of life.
- **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs):** Tribal communities in India identified as especially vulnerable because of factors such as low literacy, small or declining populations, and limited access to development opportunities.

- Rehabilitation: The process of helping people or communities recover and rebuild their lives after displacement, disaster, or other major difficulties.

3.5.12 Self Assessment Questions

3.5.12.1 Multiple Choice Questions

Choose the correct answers

1. Tribal community refers to:

- A. A group sharing common cultural traditions and social practices
- B. A group of business owners
- C. A group of government officials
- D. A group of urban professionals

2. Which term is commonly used in India for many indigenous tribal communities?

- A. Adivasis B. Zamindars C. Mahajans
- D. Artisans

3. Who officially recognizes communities as Scheduled Tribes in India?

- A. The Constitution of India and the Government of India
- B. Private organizations C. Village councils only
- D. International organizations

4. Which of the following is related to kinship?

- A. Social relationships based on family, marriage, or ancestry
- B. A system of government C. A type of occupation
- D. A form of agriculture

5. Which of the following is emphasized by egalitarian values?

- A. Equality and fairness among community members
- B. Social inequality
- C. Individual wealth above all else D. Political power

(Answers: 1. A. A group sharing common cultural traditions and social practices; 2. A. Adivasis; 3. A. The Constitution of India and the Government of India; 4. A. Social relationships based on family, marriage, or ancestry; 5. A. Equality and fairness among community members)

3.5.12.2 Short Answer Questions

1. What is meant by a tribal community?
2. What is a Scheduled Tribe?
3. What is meant by geographical isolation?
4. What is an endogamous group?
5. What are egalitarian values?
6. What are Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)?
7. What are some common traditional occupations of tribal communities in India?

3.5.12.3 Long Answer Questions

1. Explain the meaning and major characteristics of tribal communities in India.
2. Discuss the cultural diversity of tribal communities in India.
3. Explain the meaning of Scheduled Tribes and discuss their constitutional recognition in India.
4. Discuss the major challenges faced by tribal communities in contemporary India.
5. Explain the meaning of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) and discuss the challenges they face.
6. Discuss the importance of rehabilitation and development programmes for displaced tribal communities while preserving their culture and identity.

3.5.12.4 Case Study

Vimal makes a record of a traditional folktale told by his grandfather. He uploads the recording to a private family archive. Later, he creates a short video with subtitles. It is easily understood by the younger family members. The story becomes accessible to all family members living in different countries.

Questions:

1. How is technology helping preserve folklore?
2. What forms of technology can preserve folklore?

3. What is one advantage of digital preservation?
4. What is one possible disadvantage?

3.5.13 Study Guide

In this section, you have learned:

- Tribal cultures represent diverse indigenous traditions of India.
- Tribal identity is shaped by history, environment, language, and social practices.
- Oral traditions are central to preserving tribal knowledge.
- Nature, community life, and artistic expression are major features of tribal cultures.
- India has several tribal regions with unique communities.
- Gond, Santhal, Bhil, Toda, Khasi, and Naga communities demonstrate the diversity of Indian tribal heritage.

3.5.14 References

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UNIT – IV

Lesson 4.1 - Indian Social Structure – An overview

4.1.0 Learning Objectives

After completing this lesson, learners will be able to:

- Understand the concept of Society, Indian Society.
- Know the meaning of Social Structure.
- Explain the meaning and characteristics of Indian social structure.
- Identify major components of Indian Social Structure.
- Appreciate the concepts of continuity and change in society.

4.1.1 Introduction

Society is the backbone of human existence. It nurtures individuals, protects rights and ensures the smooth functioning of life. For a nation like India, where diversity is both a strength and a challenge, a healthy society is important one that embraces equality, preserves culture and adapts to change. Indian society is one of the oldest and most diverse societies in the world. Its social structure has evolved over thousands of years through the interaction of religion, culture, education, economy, politics and law. Despite these differences, the nation remains united, embodying the ethos of “accommodation without assimilation.”

This Lesson explains the continuity and transformation of India's social structure by examining four important dimensions—caste, community, class and gender. For easy understanding of the students, this unit is divided into three parts: (i) Indian Social Structure: An overview; (ii) Caste and Community; and (iii) Class and Gender

4.1.2 Assessment of Prior Knowledge

Before studying this unit, answer the following questions.

1. What do you understand by the term society?
2. What is meant by social status and social role?
3. Name some important social institutions in India.

4. What do you know about the caste system in India?
5. Name any two social reformers who worked against social inequalities.
6. What is a joint family? How is it different from a nuclear family?
7. What factors influence marriage in Indian society?
8. Name the major religious communities found in India.
9. What are some major differences between rural and urban society?
10. What is meant by gender inequality?

Write your responses in 3 – 5 sentences.

Learning Activity: 1

Interview five elderly persons in your locality.

Ask:

- What changes have they observed in society during the last 40 years?
- Has education changed people's attitudes?
- Are caste barriers reducing?
- Are women participating more in education and employment?

Record their responses.

4.1.3 Meaning of Society

The word society originates from the Latin word *societas*, meaning “companionship” or “association” or fellowship.” In sociology, society can be viewed from two different angles, viz., structural view of society and functional view of society.

According to the structural view, society refers to the social heritage of folkways, mores, ideals, institutions and habits.

According to the functional view, society is a process of social relationships. Society is a complex of group in reciprocal relationship, interacting among themselves and carrying on an interdependent life and helping each other in fulfilling their wishes.

NCERT Definition:

Society is a system of social relationships among individuals, based on shared values, norms and institutions.

Thus, it is observed that society is not just a collection of individuals—it is the pattern of relationships among them. Therefore, ‘Society’ may be defined as a group of people who live in a particular country or region and share a common culture, religion, language, or set of values.

4.1.4 Meaning of Indian Society

Indian society is a diverse and complex mixture of different religions, cultures, ethnic groups, and social classes. There is a wide range of customs, traditions, and beliefs that shape the way people live and interact with each other. Indian society has evolved through an intricate historical trajectory shaped by several important events such as the arrival of the Aryans, the rise of indigenous religions such as Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism, the influx of non-Indic religions, Muslim invasions, the era of Western colonialism, the struggle for independence and the partition in 1947. This cumulative process has resulted in a multifaceted society, characterized by a myriad of influences.

4.1.5 Meaning of Social Structure

A social structure represents the organized relationships and patterns among individuals and groups within a society. These systems are made up of social groups or categories of people. Social structure provides a blueprint for collective functioning, embedding shared values into institutional practices. It highlights how societies organize themselves not through random connections, but through enduring, interconnected systems that sustain stability across generations.

The term “social structure” means the systematic network of institutions and relationships that shape how people interact within a community. It establishes a framework which includes roles, expected behaviours tied to specific positions; statuses, representing social standing; and institutions like family, education and government to uphold societal order.

4.1.6 Concept of Indian Social Structure

Indian society is a blend of different cultures. Yes. India is one of the world’s most complex societies because it holds within itself an extraordinary range of cultures, languages, religions, castes and traditions, all functioning within a single democratic framework. Yet, beneath all this variety, there is a recognizable Indianness that binds these elements

together. This complexity is not a weakness. It is the defining character of Indian social structure. To study Indian society is to study a living example of how deep diversity and underlying unity can coexist.

At its core, Indian social structure is composite in nature. It has been shaped over thousands of years through the continuous interaction of various racial groups, religious traditions, linguistic communities, and cultural practices. where religion, caste, and region each follow their own traditions – resulting in enormous variety in art, architecture, music, dance, food and lifestyle.

4.1.7 Characteristics of Indian Social Structure

India's strength lies in its capacity to accommodate and celebrate its pluralistic nature. It provides a platform for various identities to coexist harmoniously, fostering a vibrant cultural tapestry. Though it is difficult to summarize features of Indian society due to its inherent complexity and richness, for understanding and simplifying the challenge, the salient features of Indian society can be listed down as follows:

A. Diversity: India is known for its remarkable diversity in terms of religion, language, culture, customs, food habits, dress, and traditions. People belonging to different communities coexist while maintaining their distinct identities, making India a multicultural society. For example: Hindus celebrate Diwali, Muslims celebrate Eid, Christians celebrate Christmas, and Sikhs celebrate Gurmurb. Similarly, India has 22 officially recognized languages and hundreds of regional dialects.

B. Continuity: Continuity refers to the preservation of social values, customs, traditions and cultural practices across generations. Many ancient traditions have been maintained despite rapid social and technological changes, providing stability to society. For example: Traditional festivals such as Pongal, Onam, Baisakhi, Durga Puja and Deepavali continue to be celebrated.

C. Change: Change refers to the transformation of social institutions, values, lifestyles, and relationships over time. Factors such as education, urbanization, industrialization, constitutional reforms, technology, and globalization have significantly changed Indian society. For example: Today, women participate actively in higher education, business, administration, science, and politics. Similarly, many young people choose careers based on their interests rather than following hereditary occupations.

D. Social Institutions: Social institutions are organized systems that regulate human behaviour and fulfil the basic needs of society. Social Institutions such as the family, marriage, education, religion, economy, and government help maintain social order and ensure the smooth functioning of society. For example: Families nurture children and transmit cultural values, Schools provide education and develop responsible citizens, while the legal system protects the rights of individuals and maintains justice.

E. Cultural Traditions: Cultural traditions include the customs, beliefs, rituals, festivals, art forms, languages, literature, music, dance and values that are passed down from one generation to another. These traditions preserve India's rich cultural heritage. For example: Classical dance such as Bharatanatyam, Kathak, Kuchipudi and Odissi, as well as traditional practices like Yoga and Ayurveda, continue to be respected and practiced in India and across the world.

Learning Activity: 3

Identify and list down various festival celebrated in your region.

Elaborate on the celebrations of a particular festival of your region

What sort of food items are in practice in your place? Also, know about the special food items attributed to your place.

4.1.8 Major Components of Indian Social Structure

The Indian social structure is composed of several interrelated institutions each component performs a specific function and contributes to maintaining social order, cultural continuity and national development. They are discussed below:

- Family
- Marriage
- Religion
- Caste
- Community
- Class
- Gender
- Economy
- Education
- Political institutions

A. Family: 'Family is a group of persons united by ties of marriage, blood or adoption constituting a single household interacting and intercommunicating with each other in their respective social roles of husband and wife, father and mother, son and daughter, brother and sister, creating a common culture.' – Burgess and Locke

The family is the basic unit of society and the first institution where individuals learn values, customs, language, and social behaviour. It provides emotional support, economic security and social identity to its members. Example: In many Indian families, grandparents share stories and traditions with children, while parents ensure their education and well-being. There are many types of the family as stated below:

- **Joint or Extended Family:** This family is based on close blood ties. It includes members of three to four generations. It is an extension of parent-child relationships.
- **Nuclear Family:** It consists of a husband, wife, and unmarried children. It is very small in size. It is an autonomous unit. There is no control of the elders because newlyweds create separate residences for themselves, which is independent of elders.
- **Patrilocal family:** The family in which after marriage wife comes to reside in the family of her husband is known as patrilocal family.
- **Matrilocal family:** The family in which after marriage husband comes to reside in the family of her wife is known as matrilocal family.
- **Bilocal family:** In this type of family, after marriage, the married couple changes their residence alternatively.
- **Neolocal family:** After marriage when newly married couple establish a new family independent of their parents and settled at a new place this type of family is known as neolocal family.
- **Patriarchal Family:** The family in which all the power remains in the hands of the patriarch or father (eldest male member) is known as a patriarchal family. He exercises absolute power or authority over the other members of the family. He owns the family property.
- **Matriarchal family:** In this family, power or authority, rests on the eldest female member of the family, especially the wife or mother. She enjoys absolute power over other members of the family. She owns all the family property. In this family, the descent is known through the mother.

B. Marriage: Marriage is a socially recognized institution that establishes a legal and cultural relationship between two individuals and their families. It promotes family formation, social stability and the continuation of society through future generations. Marriages are conducted with elaborate rituals and much money is spent on this occasion. Example: Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikh, and other communities in India follow different marriage customs and ceremonies, reflecting the country's cultural diversity.

C. Religion: Religion is a system of beliefs, values, rituals and moral principles that guides the spiritual and ethical life of individuals. It influences festivals, traditions, social practices, and community life while promoting values such as compassion, honesty, and service. India is characterized by religious diversity, with Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism and other religions coexisting. Religious practices and beliefs often influence social customs and traditions. Example: Hindus celebrate Diwali, Muslims observe Ramadan and Eid, Christians celebrate Christmas and Sikhs celebrate Gurburab, showcasing India's religious diversity.

D. Caste: It is a hereditary, endogamous group forming a single homogeneous community. The caste system is a social hierarchy in India originally based on a person's birth. It divides society into different groups called castes, which are further subdivided into subcastes. The four varna - Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Shudra are the classical four divisions of Hindu society. In practice, however, there have always been many subdivisions (Jatis) of these varnas, which today connote castes (Jatis) in India. A detailed study of caste system would be provided in the subsequent lesson. Example: Reservation policies for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) aim to promote social justice and provide equal opportunities in education and employment.

E. Community: A strong sense of community or collective consciousness is a defining feature of Indian villages. A community is a group of people who share common characteristics such as locality, language, religion, culture, or occupation. Communities encourage cooperation, mutual support, and the preservation of cultural traditions. The spirit of cooperation strengthens social bonds and ensures survival during crises like droughts or crop failures. For example: A fishing community living along the coastal regions of Tamil Nadu or a tribal community in Odisha shares common occupations, customs, and social practices.

F. Class: Grouping of people based on economic status, education, occupation, income, and lifestyle rather than birth is known as Class. The class system is open, allowing individuals to improve their social position through education, employment and entrepreneurship. Example: A person from a low-income family may become a successful doctor or software engineer through higher education and move into the middle or upper class.

G. Gender Stratification: Gender stratification refers to the systematic ranking of people based on gender, where that ranking determines access to resources, power and social status. In India, this stratification is not incidental, it is deeply embedded in institutions, customs and ideologies that have evolved over millennia. Although the Indian Constitution grants men and women equal rights, significant gender disparities remain across economic participation, educational attainment, health and political representation. The gap between legal equality and social reality is precisely where sociological analysis becomes essential. Modern Indian society increasingly promotes gender equality by encouraging equal opportunities in education, employment, and leadership. For example: Women today serve as scientists, judges, pilots, entrepreneurs, police officers, and political leaders, demonstrating changing gender roles.

H. Economy: The economy refers to the system through which goods and services are produced, distributed and consumed in society. Economic activities create employment, generate income, and improve the standard of living of individuals and communities. For example: Agriculture, manufacturing, information technology, tourism and banking are major sectors that contribute to India's economic growth and provide livelihoods to millions of people.

I. Education: Education is a vital social institution that develops knowledge, skills, values, and critical thinking among individuals. It promotes social mobility, reduces inequality, and prepares citizens to participate effectively in economic and democratic life. Example: Government initiatives such as the Right to Education (RTE) Act and digital learning platforms have expanded educational opportunities for children across India.

J. Political Institutions: Political institutions of India include the Constitution, Parliament, State Legislatures, Judiciary, Election Commission and local self-government bodies that govern the country

and protect rights of the citizens. They maintain law and order, formulate public policies and strengthen democracy through people's participation.

Example: Citizens elect their representatives in Lok Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies, and Panchayati Raj Institutions, enabling democratic governance and local development.

To conclude, these components are interconnected and collectively shape the life of India. While they preserve the continuity of Indian society, they also adapt to changing social and economic conditions, contributing to the country's ongoing development.

Learning Activity: 4

Identify various types of families you come across among your family, among the families of relatives and friends.

4.1.9 Continuity and Change of the Indian Social Structure

Indian society reflects both continuity and change.

Continuity

Continuity means preserving traditions and cultural practices generation to generation. It is the preservation of social values, customs, traditions and cultural practices over a period of time. Many ancient traditions have been maintained despite rapid social and technological changes, providing stability to society.

Example: Traditional festivals such as Diwali, Durga Puja, Pongal, Onam and Baisakhi continue to be celebrated with enthusiasm. Respect for elders and family values also remain important features of Indian society.

Change

Change refers to the transformation of social institutions, values, lifestyles and relationships over time. Factors such as education, urbanization, industrialization, constitutional reforms, science and technology, social movements, democratic governance and globalization have significantly changed Indian society. For example: Today, women participate in higher education, business, administration, science and politics. Similarly, many young people choose careers based on their interests rather than following hereditary occupations.

Learning Activity: 5

Identify and list down social values, customs, traditions and cultural practices followed in your family continuously for the last three generations

Examples of Change

Earlier	Today
Joint families	Nuclear families
Limited education for girls	Equal educational opportunities
Hereditary occupations	Career based on qualifications
Traditional communication	Digital communication
Social restrictions	Greater freedom

4.1.10 Factors Responsible for Social Change

Social change refers to an alteration in the social structure of a society. It refers to the significant alterations in social structures, cultural symbols, rules of behaviour and value systems over time. Major forces influencing Indian social structure include:

A. Technological Factors: The invention of the steam engine, internet and now AI radically alters labour relations, family structures and communication. Use of machines in place of human labour, Rise of factories, Development of world market instead of local market, Improved means of transport and communication and a currency based economy are the reasons for change in the social structure.

B. Demographic Factors: Changes in population size both numbers and composition have a far-reaching effect on society. For example, an increase in population has resulted in an increase in unemployment, poverty, urbanisation, social tension and the burden on infrastructural facilities. All these have resulted in the absence of adequate facilities, rise in nuclear families and altered social relationships.

C. Cultural Factors: Any change in values or belief systems on the part of social group affects social institutions. For example, rise of nuclear families has changed the family system in India. The joint family system has slowly disintegrated and this has altered relationships within the family.

D. Political Factors: Law act as an instrument of socio-economic and political change in society protecting the interests of the weaker sections of society and women.

E. Environmental / Geographical Factors: Climate change, natural disasters, and ecological depletion force societal adaptation, as studied under environmental sociology.

F. Education: Education plays an important role in social change. New ideas and values are initiated by education and become the goals for the young generation to pursue and achieve. Modern education lays emphasis on subjects like law, human rights, democracy and tries to inculcate knowledge on various aspects. Education ensures the allocation of positions in society suitable to the skills of the individuals and help to enhance his status in the society.

Examples of Social Change

Situation	Social Change Observed
Girls pursuing higher education	Gender equality
Inter-state marriages	Cultural integration
Online education	Technological change
Start-up culture	Class mobility
Community health campaigns	Collective participation

Learning Activity: 6

Identify the Community health campaigns undertaken in your institution or residential locality.

4.1.11 Summary

Society holds a significant place in sociology. Its characteristics, such as population, interdependence, co-operation, conflict and cultural distinctiveness, contribute to its dynamic nature and ongoing evolution over time. Understanding the various dimensions and aspects of society is essential for comprehending human behaviour and interactions. The social structure determines the position of individuals and groups in society and influences their rights, responsibilities, opportunities and patterns of

interaction. Although traditional institutions continue to play an important role, Indian society is continuously changing due to modernization, education, urbanization, industrialization, and globalization.

4.1.12 Key Terms

- **Society:** A society is a group of people who live together and share common rules, values, and institutions.
- **Social Structure:** Social structure is the organized pattern of relationships, roles, and institutions within a society.
- **Social Status:** Social status is the position or rank a person holds in society.

4.1.13 Self Assessment Questions

4.1.3.1 Multiple Choice Questions

Choose the correct answers

1. Social structure means.....

- A) Physical structure of a building B) Population size
C) Economic system only D) Pattern of social relationships and institutions in society

2. Which of the following is a component of social structure?

- A) Social status B) Weather C) Climate
D) Natural resources

3. Which of the following is a major component of social structure?

- A) Social institutions B) Mountains C) Rivers D) Climate

4. How does education affect social structure?

- A) It can influence social mobility and occupational opportunities' B) It prevents social change
C) It has no social impact D) It removes all social differences

5. Social stratification refers to:

- A) Division of society into different social layers or groups
B) Family bonding
C) Complete equality in society D) Cultural celebration

(**Answers:** 1. D) Pattern of social relationships and institutions in society;
2. A) Social status; 3. A) Social institutions; 4. A) It can influence social

mobility and occupational opportunities; 5. A) Division of society into different social layers or groups

4.1.13.2 Short-Answer Questions

1. What is meant by society?
2. Define social structure.
3. What are the main features of society?
4. What is social status?
5. What is a social role?
6. What are the main components of social structure?
7. Mention any four factors responsible for social structure.

4.1.13.3 Long-Answer Questions

1. Define society and explain its major characteristics.
2. What is social structure? Explain its main features in detail.
3. Discuss the major components of social structure.
4. Describe the role of family and marriage in social structure.
5. Explain the concept of social stratification with suitable examples.
6. Discuss the various factors responsible for the formation of social structure.
7. Explain continuity and change in Indian social structure with suitable examples.

4.1.13.4 Case Study

Discuss with your family members and make a list of practices which you have believe to be changed over the period of time from your old generation. The points such as Family system, education of girls, hereditary occupation, communication system and social restrictions may be considered for discussion.

4.1.15 Study Guide

- Society is based on interaction and social relationships.
- Social structure is an organized framework for these relationships.
- Social structure is influenced by culture, economy, politics, demography, education, religion, geography, and technology.

- Indian social structure is shaped by caste, class, family, kinship, religion, tribal communities, urbanization, and social change.
- Family and marriage are fundamental social institutions.
- Social stratification creates different levels or layers within society.

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Lesson 4.2 - Indian Social Structure: Caste

4.2.0 Learning Objectives

- Understand the concept of caste system
- Trace out the evolution of caste system in India
- Explain the concept and significance of community.
- Describe the characteristics of caste system in India
- Discuss the functions of caste system in India
- Identify the structural components of the caste system
- Differentiate varna from jati
- Analyse the causes for change in the nature of caste system

4.2.1 Introduction

A person's caste determined many aspects of life. Membership of a caste was inherited from one's parents and generally remained unchanged throughout life. The influence of the caste system has declined considerably in modern India on account of education, urbanization, industrialization, constitutional reforms, and economic development. Still, caste system continues to influence social identity and political life in certain parts of the country. This lesson would provide an account of the evolution of caste system in India, characteristic features of caste system, factors contributing for changes in caste system, reasons for caste based discrimination, constitutional and legal provisions to eradicate discrimination.

4.2.2 Meaning of Caste

The word "caste" is derived from the Portuguese word *casta*, meaning "race," "breed," or "lineage." and is intended to be used for classification based on the purity of blood. In the Indian context, caste refers to a hereditary system of social stratification in which individuals are traditionally assigned to a particular social group by birth.

4.2.3 Origin of the Caste System

According to Anderson and Parker, "Caste is that extreme form of social class organization in which the position of individuals in the status hierarchy is determined by descent and birth."

The caste system evolved gradually over several centuries. The origins of the caste system in India are not fully known, but castes seem to have originated more than 2,000 years ago. History of caste can be traced with age as Vedic period; medieval period; Colonial times and Post Colonial times.

4.2.3.1 Vedic Period:

Its origins can be traced to the early Vedic period as documented in ancient texts such as the Rigveda and the Manusmriti. During the Vedic period, society was organized into four primary varnas or social classes: Brahmins (priests and scholars), Kshatriyas (warriors and rulers), Vaishyas (merchants and traders), and Shudras (labourers and service providers). These varnas were believed to have originated from the cosmic being, Purusha, with each varna having specific duties and responsibilities.

According to Ghurye (1961), the caste system gained institutionalization during the later Vedic period and the early medieval period, with the emergence of jatis or sub-castes based on occupation and kinship ties. Evidences provide insights into the prevalence and structure of the caste system during different historical periods. For example, the Manusmriti, delineates the rules and regulations governing each varna and outlines the penalties for transgressing caste boundaries.

4.2.3.2 Medieval period:

With the emergence of new occupational groups and artisan communities, during medieval period further stratification within the caste system was made. According to Eaton (2001), the creation of jatis during this period reflected the diversification of economic activities and the integration of diverse cultural groups into the social fabric of India.

4.2.3.3 Colonial Period:

In Colonial period British administrators sought to codify and categorize caste identities for administrative purposes. Census operations conducted by the British further solidified caste identities and laid foundation for the caste-based discrimination and inequalities.

To conclude, the evolution of the caste system in India rooted in ancient texts and societal practices. Historical Evolution of the Caste System can be depicted as follows:

Time Period	Key Developments
Ancient Times	Emergence of early social hierarchies based on occupation
Vedic Period	Codification of varna system in religious texts (Rigveda)
Medieval Period	Expansion of jati system; consolidation of caste identities
Colonial Era	Impact of British colonial policies on caste dynamics
Post-Independence Era	Constitutional reforms and affirmative action (reservation)

4.2.4 Characteristics of Caste System in India

A comprehensive understanding of the caste system in India is essential to appreciate India's social fabric and addressing persistent inequalities. While officially outlawed by the Indian Constitution, its influence continues to be felt in various aspects of Indian society. The following are the unique characteristics of Indian caste system.

A. Segmentary division of Society: Indian society is primarily divided into different castes. Caste membership is determined by birth and not by accomplishments. As a result, caste is able to deal with the issues related to its members independently of government controls. It is common for castes to have their own gods and goddesses that are not included in the broader religious tradition.

B. Hierarchy: According to Louis Dumont, castes teach us a fundamental social principle of hierarchy. Castes have a specific scheme of social and ritual hierarchy with Brahmins traditionally occupying the highest position and Shudras the lowest. Below the Shudras were those considered 'untouchable' (Dalits), excluded from the four-fold Varna system. A sense of high and low, superiority and inferiority, is associated with this gradation or ranking.

C. Restrictions on food and drink: There are restrictions on the kind of food that can be eaten together, received, or exchanged among castes. There are certain types of foods that certain castes accept only from members of other castes. Pakka and kucha foods are two categories. Kucha

food is cooked in water and is considered inferior to pakka food which is cooked in ghee. Brahmin to take pakka food from Kshatriyas and Vaishyas, but not from Shudras and untouchables. While Kshatriyas accept kucha food from a Brahmin, they only accept pakka food from Vaishyas who are lower than them. Food prepared by Brahmin is acceptable to all, the reason for which domination of Brahmins in the hotel industry for a long time. The beef was not allowed by any castes, except harijans.

D. Restrictions on social intercourse: Caste positions are reflected in the physical distance between castes. Strict social restrictions governed interactions between castes, including limitations on commensality (sharing food), access to public spaces, and social mobility. For example, in Kerala society Nayyars are allowed to approach Nambudris, but cannot touch them, while members of the Tiya caste (lower than Nayyars) must keep 36 steps away.

E. Restrictions on Endogamy: Endogamy or marriage within one's own caste or sub-caste is an essential feature of the caste system, i.e. the members of a caste or sub-caste should marry within their own caste or sub-caste. This reinforces caste boundaries and maintains the perceived 'purity' of the caste. The violation of the rule of endogamy would mean ostracism and loss of caste. Gotra exogamy is also maintained in each caste. The members of one gotra are believed to be successors of a common ancestor-hence prohibition of marriage within the same gotra. However, hypergamy (the practice of women marrying someone who is wealthier or of higher caste or social status.) and hypogamy (marriage with a person of lower social status) were also prevalent.

F. Restricted choice of occupation: Traditionally, each caste was associated with an occupation and membership is hereditary. The individual had no choice but to adopt the occupation of his caste, regardless of his aptitudes and skills. Each occupation was also associated with a specific caste. In order to learn the occupational skills of the caste, young members would be paired with older members. Education was not universal and common. For example: The Brahmins who occupied the uppermost rank were prescribed the duties of acquiring and teaching sacred knowledge and performing sacrifices, while lower castes, such as Dalits, were historically restricted to jobs such as manual labour.

G. Jajmani System: There was a jajmani system of economic relations between the various castes in pre-modern times. It was the responsibility

of each service caste to perform a particular function for the landlords. It was common for them to receive payment in kind every year. Client-patron relationships existed between the service castes and the higher castes.

H. Ritual Purity and Pollution: The higher castes claimed to have ritual, spiritual and racial purity by keeping the lower castes away through the notion of pollution. The idea of pollution means a touch of lower caste man would pollute a man of higher caste. Even his shadow is considered enough to pollute a higher caste man. Concepts of ritual purity and pollution played a significant role in justifying social hierarchies and maintaining caste boundaries.

I. Jati Panchayat: The status of each caste is protected by caste laws and the conventions. These are enforced through a governing body called Jati Panchayat. These Panchayats in different regions are named in a particular fashion. For example 'Kuldriya' (Madhya Pradesh) and 'Jokhila' (South Rajasthan).

Learning Activity: 1

Identify various gods and goddesses worshiped by your relatives, friends and neighbours and the differences in their worship methods.

4.2.5 Functions of Caste system in India:

Following are the list of some of the major functions of caste system in India:

1. It keeps the traditional social organization of India intact.
2. It has accommodated multiple communities by ensuring each of them a monopoly of a specific means of livelihood.
3. It provided social security and social recognition to individuals.
4. It has handed over the knowledge and skills of the hereditary occupation from one generation to another and preserved culture and ensured productivity.
5. It plays a crucial role in the process of socialization by teaching individuals the culture and traditions, values and norms of their society.
6. It acted as a trade union and protected its members from the exploitation.
7. It maintained racial purity through endogamy.

1. Specialization led to quality production of goods and thus promoted economic development. For eg: Many handicraft items of India gained international recognition due to this.

4.2.6 Structural Components of the Caste System

Over centuries, the basic framework evolved into thousands of sub-castes or jatis, forming the practical units of the caste system as experienced in daily life. The following discussion would highlight the components of caste system in India. For the sake of simplicity, it is categorized into three classifications.

- A. Varna System
- B. Jati System
- C. Role of Ritual Purity and Social Status

4.2.6.1 Varna System: (Four-Fold Division)

The Varna system categorized society into four main varnas or classes: Brahmins (priests and scholars), Kshatriyas (warriors and rulers), Vaishyas (traders and merchants), and Shudras (laborers and artisans). This hierarchical division based on occupation and social status was fundamental to the organization of ancient Indian society (Deshpande, 2015).

Meaning of Varna

The Sanskrit word "Varna" literally means "colour," "type," "category," or "classification." In ancient India, society was broadly divided into four Varnas based on occupations and social responsibilities. These divisions were intended to promote specialization of work and social organizations. The four traditional Varnas were:

- Brahmins (priests and scholars)
- Kshatriyas (warriors and rulers)
- Vaishyas (traders and merchants)
- Shudras (laborers and artisans)

The Four Traditional Varnas

1. Brahmins: The Brahmins were traditionally regarded as the scholarly class. Their primary duties included teaching the Vedas, performing religious rituals, offering spiritual guidance, and preserving knowledge.

They were expected to lead simple lives devoted to learning, morality, and religious service. Their **traditional Occupations:** Priests, Teachers (Gurus), Scholars, Philosophers and Astrologers. For example, A village priest conducting religious ceremonies in a temple or a Sanskrit scholar teaching ancient scriptures represents the traditional role of a Brahmin. But today, Brahmins work in diverse professions and no longer restricted to religious activities.

2. Kshatriyas: The Kshatriyas were traditionally the warrior and ruling class. They were responsible for protecting society, maintaining law and order, defending the kingdom and administering justice. They were expected to possess traits such as courage, leadership, discipline and a strong sense of duty. Their traditional Occupations: Kings, Military commanders, Soldiers, Police officers and Administrators. For example, Historical rulers such as Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and Maharana Pratap are often associated with the Kshatriya tradition of protecting their kingdoms and people. But in Modern India, individuals from Kshatriya communities work in all professions, including the armed forces, civil services, business, education, and politics.

3. Vaishyas: The Vaishyas were traditionally engaged in agriculture, trade, commerce, animal husbandry and banking. They played an important role in the economic development of society by producing goods, conducting trade and generating wealth. They contributed significantly to for the development of trade and supported economic prosperity. Their traditional Occupations: Farmers, Merchants and Bankers. For example, A merchant dealing in textiles or a farmer cultivating crops represented the traditional role of the Vaishya community. But today, people from Vaishya community are successful corporate executives, entrepreneurs, industrialists, exporters, bankers, software professionals, etc.

4. Shudras: Those who performed various forms of skilled and unskilled labour and provided essential services to society. They were doing the work of carpentry, blacksmithing, pottery, weaving, construction and other crafts. They were indispensable to the functioning of society, although they occupied a lower social position. Traditional Occupations are: Carpenters, Potters, Weavers, Blacksmiths, Agricultural labourers and Artisans. For example, A village carpenter making agricultural tools or a potter producing clay utensils illustrates the traditional occupations associated with this group. In modern context, they are found in

every profession, including teaching, engineering, medicine, public administration, business, politics and scientific research.

Learning Activity: 2

Observe whether the Varan system is in vogue anywhere in your region known to you, if so, write a report of 10 lines about how it operates at present.

16.6.2 Jati System:

‘Jati’ originates from the root word ‘Jana’ which implies taking birth. Thus, caste is concerned with birth. In its earliest form, Indian society was organized according to the Varna system, which classified people mainly on the basis of their occupations and duties rather than birth. The Varna system consisted of only four broad categories. Over time, this occupational classification became hereditary and developed into the more rigid caste system known as ‘jati’. (Castes and sub castes)

Meaning of Jati

Jati means a group or society of individuals who have the same occupation, customs, and laws. Every jati had particular work or job that members were supposed to perform, such as farming, education, or commerce. A Jati is a smaller social group whose members generally share a common occupation and cultural practices, follow similar customs and traditions, conducted marriage within the group and have common ancestry.

Jati was a significant system in ancient India that grouped people into social classes according to their occupation and role.

The Jati system further divided society into numerous local and occupational groups, each with its distinct social and economic functions. This intricate network of jatis contributed to the perpetuation of social stratification and cultural practices across different regions of India (Jaffrelot, 2017).

Emergence of Jatis (Castes)

In ancient India, individuals were classified into various social groups known as jati, which defined their positions in society. The number of jatis increased over time, leading to a system referred to as the proliferation of castes.

The multiplication of castes is the way in which the number of jatis increased over time. As society evolved, new groups emerged and individuals were grouped into even smaller categories. This expansion of the number of jatis created stricter regulations concerning who was supposed to do which work and with whom they should get married.

As time passed, this resulted in there being more and more groups and it was more difficult to keep track of who belonged to what group. These partitions were significant before, but now that these castes are not so strict and, in many regions and this hurdle slowly becoming easier and uncomplicated.

As new occupations emerged and people settled in different regions, new castes and sub-castes developed. Consequently, India today has several thousand of Jatis belonging to different linguistic, cultural and regional backgrounds.

The emergence of Jatis was influenced by several factors, such as:

- Occupational specialization
- Regional differences
- Linguistic diversity
- Migration
- Religious practices
- Interactions among different communities

Example:

Traditional occupations such as weaving, pottery, blacksmithing, goldsmithing, carpentry, fishing, and oil extraction gradually became associated with different Jatis in various parts of India that it was practiced earlier.

4.2.6.3 Role of Ritual Purity and Social Status:

Ritual purity played a crucial role in maintaining social boundaries and reinforcing caste-based identities. The concept of untouchability, rooted in notions of ritual purity, marginalized certain castes and restricted their social mobility (Ambedkar, 2012).

4.2.6.4 Difference Between Varna and Jati

It is important to distinguish between Varna and Jati:

- Varna refers to the four broad categories described in ancient texts.

- Jati refers to the thousands of specific castes and sub-castes that developed later based on occupation, locality, customs, and kinship.

Jati and Varna are two distinct social systems that have been prevalent in Indian society for centuries. Jati refers to the system of social stratification based on occupation and kinship ties, where individuals are born into specific occupational groups or castes. It is a more localized and flexible system, allowing for mobility within one's jati.

On the other hand, Varna is a broader and more rigid system of social classification based on one's inherent qualities and duties. It categorizes individuals into four main varnas - Brahmins (priests and scholars), Kshatriyas (warriors and rulers), Vaishyas (merchants and farmers), and Shudras (laborers and servants).

While both systems play a significant role in shaping social structure of Indian society, Jati is more specific to one's occupation and community, while Varna is a broader classification based on one's inherent qualities and duties.

While Jati and Varna share some similarities, such as their influence on social structure and the preservation of cultural practices, they also have distinct attributes that set them apart. The comparison chart given below would explain those differences.

Attribute	Jati	Varna
Origin	Indigenous to India	Indigenous to India
Meaning	Specific social group	Broad social classification
Example	Yadav, Nair, Chettiar, Jat, Lingayat, Vanniyar, etc.	Brahmin, Kshatriya
Number of Divisions	Thousands	Four
Basis	Birth, customs, occupation, locality	Traditionally occupation and duties
Social Mobility	Generally limited	Restricted, but some mobility possible
Scope	Specific	General
Occupational Association	Specific occupations associated with each jati	Specific occupations associated with each varna
Intermarriage	Restricted within the same jati	Restricted within the same varna

Thus, Jati is deeply rooted in Indian society and has been prevalent for centuries. Though Varna was historically significant, it has lost much of its influence in modern times. To conclude, Jati and Varna are two important aspects of the Indian social system contribute to the social structure, cultural diversity and overall functioning of Indian society. Understanding their attributes and impact is crucial for comprehending the complexities of the Indian social system.

Learning Activity: 3

Name various jatis you come across, if any, in your daily routine and classify them on the basis of Varnas.

4.2.7 Changing Nature of the Caste System

Modern India has witnessed important changes. The traditional caste system has undergone considerable transformation in modern India due to several social, economic, and political developments.

Major Factors Responsible for Change in Caste System in India are as follows: Caste system under the impact of certain powerful factors is undergoing rapid transformation in modern India. The factors responsible for such a change in the system are as follows:

- 1. Modern education:** With the spread of modern education, the people's belief in the divine origin of caste, Karma and Karmaphala has received a setback. As co-educational institutions came into existence, intercaste marriages are encouraged. Further, it acts as a powerful force towards the removal of untouchability. Thus, modern education paved way for change in caste system of India.
- 2. Industrialization:** The process of industrialization has provided new sources of livelihood to people and occupational mobility was made possible. Factories, mills and offices are keener with activities rather than caste system. Even though caste differences still exist, people from different castes think that discussing or asking about someone's caste is an old-fashioned or backward practice. For example, in a factory a Brahmin works along with a Shudra. He cannot avoid his touch or shadow.
- 3. Urbanization:** Industrialization gave rise to the process of urbanization. New townships have emerged. The rural people migrate to towns in order to avail better employment opportunities. With the

coming up of big hotels, restaurants, theatres, clubs and educational institutions it is not at all possible to observe communal inhibitions and taboos against food-sharing. Kingsley Davis rightly observes that the city is anonymous. It is congested. People are mobile. The city is secular. It is constantly changing. These conditions make the operation of caste virtually impossible.

4. Modern means of transport and communication: Modern means of transport and communication are instrumental in increasing spatial mobility of the people. It puts an end to the caste system. Means of transport like train, bus, tram, airplane etc. cannot provide for distinctions between castes which brought in a leveling effect into the society. It is absurd to think of any transport authority to reserve berths for Brahmins and Shudras separately. During travel, one must take his meals with others. He cannot question whether it is proper to eat with low-caste persons or to find out whether it is cooked by Brahmin or Shudra.

5. Increase in the importance of wealth: In the caste system, a person's social status and prestige were decided by the caste or family into which they were born, rather than by their abilities or achievements. People were respected or given a higher social position based on their birth into a particular caste. But now-a-days, wealth replaced ascription as the basis of social prestige. Occupations are now no longer caste-based. Rather people attach greater importance to income than anything else. That is the reason why a high-born may be ill-placed in society while a man of low caste with ample wealth has a place at the top. The emphasis is changing. The Indian caste system is gradually being replaced by a system of social classification as found common in Western countries.

6. The new legal system: The new legal system of the British Government, has given a severe blow to the caste system in India. Equality before law irrespective of castes has been firmly instituted. Discrimination against the lower castes has been removed. Further, with the establishment of law courts, the traditional castes Panchayats have lost their power and effectiveness to punish the deviants. Passing of The Untouchability Offences Act of 1955 and The Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 have reduced the harmful effects of the caste system.

7. Sanskritization: Sanskritization as “the process by which a low Hindu caste or tribal or any other group changes its customs, rituals, ideology and way of life in the direction of a high and frequently

‘twice-born’ caste”. The members of the lower castes accept the ideals and standards of higher castes leaving their own traditional ideals and behaviour patterns. Through sanskritization the lower caste people move up slightly in the scale of “Jatis’ within a particular varna. Thus, Sanskritization entails positional change not structural change.

8. Westernization: The term ‘Westernization’ signifies the changes in the Indian society during the British rule. Westernization has gone a long way in undermining the influence of the caste system by promoting education, humanism and a critical outlook towards various social issues and problems. It has given severe blow to practices like child marriage, purity and pollution, commensality, untouchability, etc. In this process, westernization has brought about profound changes in the Indian society in the form of intercaste marriages, intercommunity marriages, inter-religious marriages, occupational changes, etc.

9. Secularization: By legitimizing secular ideologies and formal legal doctrines secularization has affected certain characteristics of the caste system especially the concept of purity and pollution, commensality, fixity of occupation etc.

10. New social movements: Some social movements have also attacked the caste system. For example, the Brahmo Samaj movement led by Raja Ram Mohan Roy rejected the barriers of caste divisions and stood for universalisation and brotherhood of man. The Prarthana Sabha movement (Justice Ranade). The Arya Samaj movement (Swami Dayananda Saraswati) and Ramakrishna Mission movement raised voice against the hereditary caste system based on birth and stood for its abolition. In this way all these social movements succeeded helped in affecting some of the structural features of the caste system.

11. Rise of new social classes: Industrialization has given rise to the emergence of new social classes. These social classes are replacing the traditional castes. Trade Unions, Merchants’ Associations and Political Parties are replacing the old caste loyalties. An increase in class consciousness leads to a decrease in caste consciousness.

12. Influence of Indian Constitution: Indian Constitution offers equal opportunities to all by bestowing fundamental rights on the citizens irrespective of caste, creed, colour or sex. The Constitution directly attacks the Hindu social order based on inherited inequality. We can conclude saying that these factors have greatly influenced the caste

system. However, it is not sure that the caste system will completely disappear from Indian society. Under modern conditions, it may take new forms and serve new functions

Learning Activity: 4

Name any two social movements you come across in your region. State the functions performed by those movements and the impact that it created on the society.

Examples of Change

- Traditionally, a child born into a family of potters usually continued the family occupation of pottery. Today, however, the same child can become a doctor, engineer, teacher, entrepreneur, or civil servant through education and professional training.
- A student from a Scheduled Caste becomes an IAS officer through education and competitive examinations which illustrates increased social mobility.
- A person from any caste can now become a doctor, engineer, scientist, judge, entrepreneur, or civil servant through education and merit.
- Inter-caste marriages are becoming more common, especially in urban areas.
- Occupational choices are increasingly based on education, skills, and personal interests rather than hereditary traditions.
- The Constitution of India prohibits untouchability and guarantees equality before the law.

4.2.8 Summary

The caste system in India is a hereditary system of social stratification based mainly on birth and traditionally influenced occupation, marriage, food, and social interaction. It evolved from the broad Varna system into thousands of Jatis or castes and sub-castes over centuries. Education, industrialization, urbanization, legal reforms, social movements and the Constitution have significantly weakened traditional caste practices. Although caste discrimination is legally prohibited, caste identities continue to influence aspects of social life and politics in modern India.

4.2.9 Key Terms

- **Caste:** A hereditary social group traditionally associated with a particular social status, occupation, and rules of social interaction.
- **Jati:** A localized, hereditary social group that forms the practical basis of caste organization in Indian society.
- **Purity and Pollution:** Traditional ideas that ranked groups and activities according to perceived ritual purity or impurity.
- **Sanskritization:** A process identified by M. N. Srinivas in which a lower-status group adopts practices associated with higher-status groups to improve its social standing.
- **Social Mobility:** Movement of individuals or groups from one social position to another.
- **Social Stratification:** The structured ranking of individuals or groups into unequal social positions.
- **Varna:** The broad traditional classification of Hindu society into Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Shudra categories.

4.2.10 Self Assessment Questions

4.2.10.1 Multiple Choice Questions

Choose the correct answer

1. The term “caste” is generally associated with which concept?
 - A. Class mobility B. Social stratification based on birth
 - C. Political democracy D. Industrialization
2. One important social function of the caste system traditionally was:
 - A. Providing a framework for social organization
 - B. Eliminating social differences
 - C. Promoting complete occupational freedom
 - D. Establishing political equality
3. Which of the following was a major disadvantage of the traditional caste system?
 - A. Social cohesion B. Occupational specialization
 - C. Social inequality and discrimination
 - D. Community identity

8. Which factor has contributed to weakening traditional caste restrictions?

- A. Modern education B. Hereditary occupations
- C. Strict endogamy D. Untouchability

9. Which of the following best describes the changing nature of caste in contemporary India?

- A. Caste has completely disappeared
- B. Caste remains influential but its traditional functions and forms have changed
- C. Caste remains exactly the same as in traditional society
- D. Caste has no relationship with politics or social life

(**Answer:** 1. B. Social stratification based on birth; 2. A. Providing a framework for social organization; 3. C. Social inequality and discrimination; 4. A. Modern education; 5. B. Caste remains influential but its traditional functions and forms have changed)

4.2.10.2 Short Answer Questions

1. What do you understand by caste?
2. Explain the major characteristics of the caste system in India.
3. What were the major functions performed by caste in traditional Indian society?
4. Explain the structural components of the caste system.
5. Discuss the significance of the jati system in Indian social organization.
6. Explain M. N. Srinivas's concept of Sanskritization.
7. What is meant by the changing nature of caste?
8. Explain the relationship between caste and social mobility.

4.2.10.3 Long-Answer Questions

1. Examine the functions of caste in traditional Indian society.
2. Discuss the structural components of the caste system in India.
3. Explain the changing nature of the caste system in contemporary India.

4. Discuss the impact of modernization, urbanization, education, and industrialization on caste.
5. Examine the relationship between caste, politics, and democracy in contemporary India.
6. Discuss Sanskritization, Westernization, and social mobility as processes of caste change.
7. "Caste has changed rather than disappeared." Discuss this statement with suitable examples.
8. Identify the various processes that are bringing about changes in the traditional caste system.

4.2.10.4 Case Study

During a rainy season a city is completely flooded with water jeopardising the routine life of the people. There is full of water inside the houses. No electricity, no food, no drinking water, the essential supplies are halted. People are suffering without any movement outside their homes. At that time, residents form volunteer groups belonging to different castes, religions, and linguistic communities distribute food, arrange temporary shelters and help elderly people. People from different communities work together irrespective of their caste or religion. After the disaster, the local administration recognizes the volunteers for their collective efforts.

Questions:

1. What concept of sociology is demonstrated in this case?
2. What factors promote social cohesion?
3. How can such collective activities strengthen society?

4.2.11 Study Guide

- Caste is not simply a system of four varnas. The actual social organization of caste has historically involved thousands of jatis with considerable regional variation.
- When studying characteristics, distinguish between the ideal/traditional model of caste and its actual historical and regional variations.
- Caste could produce inequality, exclusion, discrimination and restrictions on individual mobility.

- Also study the concepts of dominant caste, Sanskritization and social mobility, particularly through the work of M. N. Srinivas.
- A useful way to understand contemporary caste is that traditional caste practices have weakened in some areas, while caste identities and networks continue to influence politics, marriage, social organization and access to resources.

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Lesson 4.3 - Indian Social Structure: Community

4.3.0 Learning Objectives

- Understand the concept of community
- Highlight the characteristics of community
- Identify the types of communities
- Appreciate the characteristics of rural and urban communities
- Analyse the challenges faced by rural and urban communities
- Suggest the ways to overcome those challenges

4.3.1 Introduction

Community plays an important role in the life of an individual. Community has a long history of its own. It has become almost natural with the human life. community is foundational and multifaceted, embodying various forms of human association, interaction, and shared identity. This lesson aims to outline the understanding of community, its definitions, characteristics, types, and the challenges faced by communities.

4.3.2 Meaning of Community

The word “community” is derived from the Latin word *communitas*, meaning “fellowship,” “commonness,” or “shared possession.” It is derived from:

- *communis* = common, shared, or public
- *munus* = service, duty, or obligation

The basic idea behind community is people who share something in common—such as a place, culture, values, interests, identity, or responsibilities.

Thus, a community may be defined as a group of people living together or sharing common interests, language, religion, culture, occupation, or traditions.

Community refers to a structure of relationships through which a localized population provides its daily requirements.

Community is a collection of people who share a common territory and meet their basic physical and social needs through daily interaction with one another.

Community is a social group with territorial base; those in the group share interests and have sense of belongingness to the group.

A Community in some senses may not even have a physical location but be demarcated by being a group of people with common interest.

4.3.3 Characteristics of Community

A.Social Networks and Interaction: Communities are characterized by dense social networks that facilitate frequent interactions among members. These interactions can range from face-to-face encounters in local settings to digital communications in online communities. The strength and quality of these interactions often determine the cohesion and resilience of the community.

B.Shared Norms and Values: Another defining characteristic of communities is the presence of shared norms, values, and beliefs. These shared elements create a sense of identity and belonging among members, guiding their behavior and fostering social solidarity. Norms and values can be explicit, such as laws and regulations, or implicit, such as cultural practices and traditions.

C.Mutual Support and Reciprocity: Mutual support and reciprocity are crucial elements of community life. Members of a community often engage in acts of cooperation and assistance, which can range from informal help among neighbors to organized support networks. This reciprocal exchange strengthens social bonds and enhances the well-being of individuals within the community.

D.Sense of Belonging and Identity: A strong sense of belonging and identity is often cultivated within communities. This sense of belonging can be derived from shared experiences, common goals, or collective struggles. It contributes to the psychological well-being of individuals and reinforces the cohesiveness of the community as a whole.

4.3.4 Types of communities

On the basis of geographical surroundings and socio cultural characteristics communities are divided into three categories. They are:

1. Rural Community
2. Urban Community
3. Tribal Community

4.3.4.1 Rural Community: Meaning

A community is a group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common such as norms, religion, values or identity is called rural community. It is a network of people in a non-urban area, connected by shared values, traditions, and often, a deep bond to the land. Rural communities are built upon connections to the land, to tradition and most importantly, to each other.

A rural community is a population center situated outside of major towns and cities. It is often characterized by lower population density and an economy traditionally linked to agriculture, forestry, or fishing.

In its social fabric rural community is the intricate web of relationships and mutual dependencies that develop in places where resources may be more locally sourced and where reliance on one another is frequently a way of life.

For example, Residents of a village jointly celebrate festivals, maintain common resources and resolve local issues through community participation.

4.3.4.2 Characteristics of Rural community

It is a difficult to form a precise definition of the term rural or village community. Generally, it is understood to mean a small area with small population, which follows agriculture not only as an occupation but also a way of life. The village is the oldest permanent community of man. Besides, this community generally possess the following characteristics.

1. **Size:** The village communities are small in size. There may be a few households or small number of people
2. **Population:** As the villages have large areas of land for Cultivation the number of inhabitants is small.
3. **Environment:** Villages have natural surroundings. Animals, birds, river, ponds and all other natural things are common in the village. There is a saying that village is made by God or nature.

4. **Homogeneity:** The village life has much homogeneity. People of a village have common occupation and common way of living.
5. **Mobility:** Mobility means movement or migration of people from one place to another is low.
6. **Education:** Earlier most of the villagers were engaged in agriculture, but nowadays advanced education and specialization are also common in villages.
7. **Occupation:** The main occupation of the people in rural community is agriculture, animal husbandry, poultry and apiculture and fishing, etc.
8. **Social relations:** The rural communities are small and have good relationships among themselves and better social awareness also. The village is like a large family. Everyone is known personally.
9. **Type of families in village:** Village usually has larger families or extended or there may be joint families too.
10. **Social problems:** Social problems such as crime rate, juvenile delinquency, prostitution and murder are less in villages. But Indian villages have different social problems like ignorance, superstition, poverty, unemployment and conflicts based on caste system are profound.
11. **Joint family:** In villages, still we could witness joint family system as the agricultural operations require co-operation of all members of the family.
12. **Role of neighbourhood:** People assists each other. They have a closest neighbourhood relation. They share their joys and sorrows with each other.

Learning Activity: 1

Visits a village nearby and find out from the people living there about the type of family system they follow in that village and prepare a report.

Learning Activity: 2

Also, discuss with them about the types of measure that village people are taking to protect their environment. Is there any control mechanism followed by them to protect their environment or does it become habitual in their day-to-day life?

4.3.4.3 Challenges faced by Rural Community and possible solutions

A. Limited Access to Healthcare

The Challenge: In rural areas, healthcare facilities are often scarce, with many communities having only one or two clinics. For emergency situations, the nearest hospital may be hours away, creating critical delays in treatment. Furthermore, the lack of preventive services leads to higher rates of chronic illnesses.

Possible Solutions: Telemedicine can also address healthcare gaps in rural areas. Mobile healthcare units or traveling clinics can bring basic medical services directly to these areas, reducing the burden of travel for patients.

Learning Activity: 3

Pay a visit to a nearby village, discuss with the people and ascertain the lacunae in the healthcare facilities available to them. Ask them to suggest various measure to be undertaken to make good the deficiencies in the availability of healthcare facilities and write a report. Submit this report to the Social Institution functioning in your area and request them to help the people of the village by making some arrangement for providing the proper healthcare facilities.

B. Poverty

The Challenge: Poverty in rural areas is more prevalent due to a lack of well-paying jobs, limited access to education and fewer social services. Many rural communities experience high levels of food insecurity, poor housing and inadequate access to clean water and sanitation.

Possible Solutions: Tailored government assistance programs such as expanded access to food aid, healthcare services and affordable housing initiatives, Job training programs' Investments in transportation infrastructure can help to mitigate immediate needs while creating sustainable solutions for the long term.

C. Gender Inequality

The Challenge: In many rural areas, gender inequality persists, particularly in terms of access to education, employment and healthcare. Women in rural communities often face traditional gender roles that limit their freedom and opportunities. Women may have less access to healthcare services, including reproductive health care.

Possible Solutions: Increasing access to education and job training for women can help break the cycle of inequality. Providing microloans for female entrepreneurs in rural areas can empower women to create their own economic opportunities.

Learning Activity: 4

Find out one Women Self Help Group (SHG) functioning nearby and discuss with the members how this institutional set up empowered their life in respect of employment, income and standard of living. Analyse the contributing factors of SHG in reducing gender inequality and prepare a report.

D. Lack of Infrastructure

The Challenge: Rural areas often suffer from poor infrastructure, including limited roads, unreliable electricity and lack of access to high-speed internet. These deficiencies hinder economic development and reduce the quality of life for residents.

Possible Solutions: Investing in infrastructure projects, such as building or improving roads, expanding electricity access and increasing internet connectivity, can improve the quality of life in rural areas.

E. Environmental Degradation

The Challenge: Environmental issues, such as soil erosion, water pollution and deforestation, have a significant impact on rural areas. Industrial activities, like mining or factory farming, can lead to pollution that harms the land and water, impacting local communities.

Possible Solutions: Implementing sustainable farming practices, such as crop rotation, organic farming, and water conservation can help preserve the environment and protect natural resources. Policies that regulate industrial pollution and encourage green technologies can reduce the negative environmental impact of businesses.

F. Discrimination and Social Exclusion

The Challenge: Rural areas often have homogenous populations, which can lead to the exclusion of minority groups, such as racial or ethnic minorities and immigrants. This social exclusion can create

feelings of isolation, worsen mental health issues, and limit access to resources, further entrenching inequality.

Possible Solutions: Promoting diversity and inclusion through public awareness campaigns and community events can help to reduce discrimination and create a more welcoming environment. Legal protections against discrimination should be enforced and resources should be made available to minority groups to ensure equal access to employment, housing, and healthcare.

To conclude, rural areas face numerous social challenges that impact the well-being of residents. From limited access to healthcare and education to economic decline and outmigration, these issues require urgent attention. However, practical solutions can make a significant difference. By improving infrastructure, expanding access to services, and fostering inclusivity, rural communities can thrive.

Collaboration between local governments, businesses, and organizations is essential to create lasting change.

4.3.4.4 Urban Community: Meaning

It is also known as city community or civilized community. Urban Community life represents the city-life. Though the term 'Urban' popularity used, it is not properly defined. There is no single definition of a city or urban community. The word 'urbane' suggests the way of life; it indicates fashionable living.

An urban community refers to a group of people living in close proximity within a city or urban area. These communities are characterized by shared spaces, cultural diversity, and a mix of residential, commercial, and recreational areas. Urban communities can range from small neighbourhoods to large districts, each with its own unique identity and dynamics.

Unlike rural communities, urban communities often have higher population densities, more complex social structures, and greater economic activity. They serve as hubs for innovation, culture, and social interaction, making them vital to the overall development of a city.

Large, density and permanent settlement of heterogeneous individuals living place.

4.3.4.5 Characteristics of urban community:

The concentration of population, predominance of non-agricultural activities and better provision of social amenities, including health and education infrastructure, are important characteristics of urban areas. However, there is a stark variation in the distribution and access to these among the various communities living in urban areas.

1. **Large size and high density of population:** The size of the urban community is much larger than the rural community. Not only this, in urban areas, there is high density of population.
2. **Heterogeneity:** Urban population is heterogeneous. It consists of various shades of people—different castes, classes, ethnic groups, religions, etc. They are not all alike. Urban community is noteworthy for its diversity.
3. **Anonymity:** The sheer pressure of number marks for anonymity. Anonymity is a loss of identity and sense of belongingness. The heterogeneity of city life with its mixture of people of all races, castes, classes, creeds, occupations and ethnic origins heightens the sense of anonymity.
4. **Mobility and transiency:** Urban life is dynamic. Social relations are temporary. Therefore, permanency does not develop in urban relations. There is a high rate of geographical as well as social mobility in urban areas.
5. **Formality of relations:** In urban social life, relations are not intimate and kinship based. Most routine social contacts in the city are impersonal and segmented. Formal politeness takes the place of genuine friendliness.
6. **Social distance:** City people are physically crowded but socially distant.
7. **Regimentation:** The city is always in hurry. The life in the urban community becomes 'clock regulated'.
8. **Segmentation of personality:** Most routine urban contacts are of secondary group rather than primary group nature. Most contacts are instrumental, that is, we use another person as a necessary functionary to fulfill our purposes.
9. **Diverse Cultural Backgrounds:** Cities attract people from various ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds, leading to a rich cultural tapestry.

10. **Shared Infrastructure:** Urban communities rely on common resources such as public transportation, schools, and healthcare facilities.
11. **Complex Social Structures:** Urban living often involves intricate social networks, including family, friends, and professional connections.
12. **Economic Interdependence:** Many urban communities are economically interdependent, with businesses and residents relying on each other for economic stability.
13. **Diverse Occupations:** People engage in various non-agricultural jobs like business, services, industry, and administration.
14. **Modern Lifestyle:** Urban communities experience modern ways of living with better access to education, healthcare, entertainment, and technology.
15. **Social Stratification:** There exists a variety of social classes based on income, education, and occupation.

These features together define the nature of urban communities and differentiate them from rural communities.

4.3.4.6 Challenges Faced by Urban Communities

Despite their benefits, urban communities face several challenges that can impact quality of life and social cohesion. Some of the most common issues include:

- **Housing Affordability:** Rising property prices and limited housing options can make it difficult for residents to find affordable homes.
- **Transportation Congestion:** Urban areas often suffer from heavy traffic, making commuting difficult and time-consuming.
- **Social Inequality:** Urban communities can experience significant disparities in income, education, and access to resources.
- **Environmental Issues:** Cities often struggle with pollution, waste management, and climate change impacts.
- **Community Fragmentation:** Rapid urbanization can lead to the breakdown of social networks and a sense of isolation among residents.

4.3.4.7 How to overcome these challenges of Urban Communities?

Engaging with urban communities requires a thoughtful and inclusive approach. Here are some practical steps to overcome these challenges:

- **Community Events:** Organize regular events such as festivals, workshops, or volunteer programs to bring people together.
- **Collaborative Projects:** Work with local organizations to develop shared initiatives, such as urban gardens or community centers.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Establish channels for residents to provide input on urban development and policy decisions.
- **Cultural Exchange Programs:** Promote programs that celebrate diversity and encourage cross-cultural understanding.
- **Digital Engagement:** Use social media and online platforms to connect with residents and share updates on community initiatives.

4.3.5 Summary

This lesson brought into light the concept of community from its origin, explain the factors such as Social Networks and Interaction, Shared Norms and Values, Mutual Support and Reciprocity and Sense of Belonging and Identity as features of community. It classified the types of communities into three categories, viz., rural, urban and tribal communities. The detailed explanation of the meaning, characteristics and challenges faced, and the ways and means to overcome those challenges of rural and urban communities is given. The details of tribal community is explained in another lesson, 'Introduction to Tribal Community in India'.

4.3.6 Key Terms

- **Community:** A community is a group of people living in the same area or sharing common interests, values, or goals.
- **Community Fragmentation:** Community fragmentation is the breaking of a community into separate groups due to differences, conflicts, or social divisions.
- **Environmental Degradation:** Environmental degradation is the deterioration of the natural environment due to activities such as pollution, deforestation, and overuse of resources.
- **Gender Inequality:** Gender inequality is the unequal treatment, opportunities, rights, or resources given to people based on their gender.

- **Joint Family:** A joint family is a family system in which several generations and relatives live together and share responsibilities and resources.
- **Rural Community:** A rural community is a community located in the countryside where people often depend on agriculture and related activities.
- **Shared Norms:** Shared norms are the common rules, values, and expected behaviours accepted by members of a group.
- **Social Distance:** Social distance is the degree of separation or lack of social interaction between individuals or groups.
- **Social Exclusion:** Social exclusion is the process of preventing individuals or groups from fully participating in social, economic, or community life.
- **Social Inequality:** Social inequality is the unequal distribution of resources, opportunities, rights, and privileges among people or groups.
- **Social Stratification:** Social stratification is the division of society into different social levels based on factors such as wealth, status, power, or occupation.
- **Tribal Community:** A tribal community is a group of people connected by common ancestry, culture, traditions, language, and social practices.
- **Urban Community:** An urban community is a community located in a town or city with a large and diverse population.

4.3.7 Self Assessment Questions

4.3.7.1 Multiple Choice Questions

Choose the correct answer

1. Which is an important feature of a community?

A. Complete isolation	B. Social interaction
C. No common interests	D. Absence of relationships
2. Which of the following is a rural community?

A. A village mainly dependent on agriculture	B. A metropolitan city
C. A large industrial centre	D. A business district

3. Urban communities are generally characterized by:
 - A. Low population density
 - B. Greater population density and diverse occupations
 - C. Dependence only on farming
 - D. Complete absence of industries
4. Which is a major challenge faced by many urban communities?
 - A. Lack of agricultural land
 - B. Traffic congestion and overcrowding
 - C. Dependence on monsoon farming
 - D. Lack of village roads
5. Which feature helps members of a community work together?
 - A. Shared norms and values
 - B. Social isolation
 - C. Constant conflict
 - D. Lack of communication

(**Answers:** 1. B. Social interaction; 2. A. A village mainly dependent on agriculture; 3. B. Greater population density and diverse occupations; 4. B. Traffic congestion and overcrowding; 5. A. Shared norms and values)

4.3.7.2 Short answer questions

1. Mention any four features of a community.
2. What is a rural community?
3. What is an urban community?
4. What is social inequality?
5. Why is community cooperation important?
6. What are shared norms?

4.3.7.3 Long answer questions

1. Explain the different types of communities.
2. Describe the major characteristics of rural communities.
3. Describe the major characteristics of urban communities.
4. Explain the major challenges faced by rural communities.
5. Explain the major challenges faced by urban communities.
6. Compare rural and urban communities.

7. Suggest measures to strengthen communities and address their challenges.

4.3.7.4 Case study

There is a city growing rapidly and experienced two-fold increase in population within five years. Vehicle population also simultaneously doubled. Therefore, roads become congested, air pollution and noise pollution increased and affordable housing facilities are lacking. Waste disposal has also become a major concern. There is acute shortage of electricity and drinking water supplies. The local government plans to improve public transport, expand waste-management systems, and develop affordable housing.

Questions

1. What type of community is described?
2. Identify three challenges faced by the community.
3. What is one environmental problem mentioned in the case?
4. How can better public transport help the city?
5. Why is affordable housing important?

4.3.8 Study Guide

A community is a group of people connected by a common locality, interests, values, needs, or social relationships, i.e., Community = People + Connection + Common needs/interests

Features of a Community: Remember L-I-S-C-B-C: Locality: Members may share a geographical area. Interaction: Members communicate and interact. Shared norms: Members follow common rules and values. Common needs: Members may have common concerns. Belonging: Members develop a sense of identity and belonging. C – Cooperation: Members work together to achieve common goals.

Remember types of communities: Rural, urban and tribal, features and make a comparison.

Understand the rural and urban challenges and measures to overcome the challenges.

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Lesson 4.4 - Indian Social Structure: Class and Gender

4.4.0 Learning Objectives

- Understand the concept of Class system.
- Differentiate caste and class.
- Understand social class formation in modern India.
- Explain gender as a social institution.
- Trace out different categories of gender.
- Analyse the causes for gender inequality
- Examine the impact of education, industrialization, globalization and constitutional reforms on Indian society.

4.4.1 Introduction

While caste is a traditional form of stratification, class represents modern economic divisions based on income, occupation, and wealth. Class stratification has become more visible with industrialization, urbanization and the growth of capitalism.

Class-based hierarchy refers to the stratification of society based on economic and social factors rather than inherited attributes. This system classifies individuals into different strata, primarily influenced by their financial status, job types, educational achievements, and lifestyle choices. Unlike caste, which is often rigid and hereditary, class can exhibit fluidity, enabling individuals to move up or down the social ladder based on meritocratic factors.

Indian society today is divided into the upper class, middle class, working class, and the poor. These divisions are shaped by education, employment opportunities, land ownership, and access to capital. The liberalization of the Indian economy in the 1990s created new opportunities for economic mobility, but it also widened income inequality.

This lesson would explore the meaning, characteristics, types of class,

4.4.2 Meaning of Class

Class refers to social groups formed mainly on the basis of economic status, education, occupation, and income. Unlike caste, class is not determined by birth.

The class system is a system of stratification of society on the basis of education, property, business/work etc. Sociology as a subject deals with the Class System and provides definitions and understanding of the subject of class in society. Karl Marx - 'Man is a class animal' i.e. his status, age, education etc are not same in the society.

4.4.3 Definitions of Class-Based Hierarchy

According to W. F. Ogburn and M. F. Nimkoff "A social class is the aggregate of persons having essentially the same social status in a given society." y According to R. M. MacIver and C. H. Page "A social class, then, is any portion of a community marked off from the rest by social status."

According to T. B. Bottomore "Social classes are de facto (not legally or religiously defined and sanctioned) groups; they are relatively open, not closed. Their basis is indisputably economic, but they are more than economic groups.'

4.4.4 Characteristics of Class

1. Class system is based on occupation, wealth, education, age and sex.
2. Generally, there are 3 class – upper middle and tower. Status, prestige & role is attached to these classes.
3. Class arrangement is based on achieved status through eligibility and situation.
4. Class system is an open system. The membership of the class is not innate. The membership has to be acquired.
5. Wherever a class is formed feeling of consciousness is a must. There is a feeling of superiority and inferiority among class. Upper class consider the lower as inferior while the lower class considers the upper as superior.
6. Class is divided into different groups called sub-clauses. For Upper middle class, lower middle class.
7. There is social restriction. In general, there is endogamy in a class.

To maintain their status & position they mix among themselves & it is seldom that marriage between upper & lower class is wished.

8. Social conditions of members of same class is similar, their base can be different.
9. Every class has some specific objective features that help in identifying it such as – rich class live in pucca houses and luxurious apartments while the poor class lives in slums and undeveloped areas.
10. People of same class get equal opportunity to work such as industries and businesses for the upper class, labour for the lower class.

4.4.5 Factors determining class

Nature of occupation: It is the base for the emergence of many classes in the society.

Economic conditions: In the capitalist economy, economic condition help in attaining specific social status. Example, emergence of higher class, middle class and lower class.

Education: On the basis of capabilities or incompetencies. For example, Literate or illiterate.

Place of residence: People select residence as per their condition. For example, Civil lines, labour colony, slums, etc.

Religion: Indian society is divided on the basis of religion. For example, Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, etc

Caste: It is the mainstay in class determination. Various groups form a class.

4.4.6 Difference between Class and Caste system

S.No.	Caste	Class
1.	Based on birth	Birth, education, wealth etc.
2.	In general, there are 3000 castes & sub-castes in India.	Whereas class has subclasses (based on different things)
3.	Caste is a closed group	Whereas Class is an open system
4.	Even Sanskritisation is unable to change caste	Whereas class can be changed quiet easily.
5.	Caste is hereditary	

6.	Caste is a closed class. A child of Brahmin will always be a Brahmin.	But there is no such thing in class.
7.	Status is inborn and ascribed in Caste System.	Whereas in class system, it is acquired & achieved.

4.4.7 Types of Class

In India, classes are broadly identified into three categories, viz.,

1. **Upper Class:** Those people who control and regulate wealth & investment and gain profit from wealth & investment.
2. **Middle Class:** Those people who do white collared jobs or are in technical or administrative sectors.
3. **Lower Class:** These people do unskilled or semi-skilled work.

Apart from these classifications, the following discussion brings into light the other types of classification also viz., Social classes in Urban India and Rural India.

4.4.7.1 Social Classes in Urban India

Social classes in rural India refer to the different groups of people distinguished mainly by **land ownership, occupation, income, wealth, caste, and social status**. Rural society is not completely uniform; it contains several economic and social groups. They are explained below:

1. Landowners and Rich Farmers

Landlord own large areas of agricultural land. They often have access to irrigation, machinery, credit, and modern farming techniques. They may employ agricultural labourers and have considerable influence in village affairs. They are the top strata of the agrarian hierarchy, the Zamindars. But, now-a-days, lost their right to extract taxes from the peasants. They were left with truncated landholding. Their economic, political and social supremacy was also broken. A small proportion of them continue to live as rentiers. The rest have taken to active participation in the management and improvement of their farm.

2. Middle and Small Farmers

Middle farmers own enough land to support their families and sometimes employ labour during busy agricultural seasons. Small farmers have

limited land and may need to work outside their farms or borrow money to meet their needs.

3. Tenants and Sharecroppers

These farmers cultivate land belonging to others are known as tenants. They usually pay rent or give a portion of their crop to the landowner. Their economic position is often less secure because they do not own the land they cultivate. Broadly they could be classified as tenants, subtenants, sharecroppers, etc. They are generally considered weak though they form a very important component of peasant organisation in India.

4. Agricultural Labourers

Agricultural labourers generally do not own enough land to support themselves. They work on other people's farms for wages. They are among the economically weaker sections of rural society and may experience seasonal unemployment. The agricultural labourers were paid wages, which were very low. Wages were generally paid in kind i.e. food grains like paddy, wheat and pulses. A certain standard measure was employed to give these wages. Legislation towards abolition of bonded labour and minimum wage structure and employment generating programmes are the measures of the government to improve the status of the agricultural labourers.

5. Rural Artisans and Service Groups

This group includes carpenters, blacksmiths, potters, weavers, tailors, shopkeepers, barbers, and other service providers. Not all villages had families of these artisans but under the Jajmani system, sometimes a family of these occupational castes served more than one village. Rural artisans and craftsmen were hard hit under the British rule as they could not compete with machine-made and cheap industrial goods.

6. Caste and Social Status

Caste has historically been an important factor in rural social organization. However, **caste and class are not the same thing**. Economic development, education, migration, government policies, and land reforms have created greater variation within caste groups.

To conclude, rural India has a **complex class structure** based on both economic and social factors. Land ownership remains important, but

education, occupation, income, political influence and access to resources increasingly shape a person's position in rural society.

4.4.7.2 Social Classes in Urban India

Social classes in urban India refer to groups of people who differ in income, occupation, education, wealth, lifestyle, and access to resources. Urban society is generally divided into several broad social classes.

1. Upper Class

The upper class consists of wealthy business owners, industrialists, senior corporate executives, large property owners, and highly affluent professionals. They have greater access to quality education, healthcare, housing, and other resources.

2. Upper-Middle Class

This group includes successful professionals such as doctors, engineers, lawyers, managers, entrepreneurs, and senior government employees. They generally have stable incomes, good education, and a comfortable standard of living.

3. Middle Class

The urban middle class includes teachers, clerks, small business owners, office workers, technicians, and other salaried employees. They usually have moderate incomes and focus on education, employment security, housing, and improving their standard of living.

4. Lower-Middle Class

This class includes low-paid salaried workers, small traders, service workers, and people in informal occupations. Their income is often limited, and they may face difficulties related to housing, healthcare, and job security.

5. Working and Lower Class

This group includes construction workers, domestic workers, street vendors, factory workers, drivers, sanitation workers, and other low-income workers. Many depend on daily or temporary employment and have limited access to economic resources.

To conclude, urban India has a diverse and changing class structure. Education, professional employment, income, and wealth have become important determinants of social status. At the same time, inequalities in income, housing, employment, and access to services continue to create significant differences between urban social classes.

Learning Activity: 1

Prepare a Comparison table with the following points of differences among various types of classes in urban community.

- Education
- Occupation
- Income
- Housing
- Food Habits, and
- Dressing

4.4.8 Meaning of Gender

Gender refers to socially and culturally constructed roles, responsibilities, expectations, and relationships between men, women and other gender identities. Gender differs from biological sex.

Gender refers to the roles, behaviours, identities and expectations that societies assign to people based on their perceived biological sex. It is not written into DNA. It is learned, performed, enforced and constantly shifting.

Gender refers to behaviours, personal traits and social positions that society attributes to being female or male.

4.4.9 Gender Identity

This term refers to the personal sense of an individual's own gender. Some people identify as a man, while others identify as a woman. Others may identify as neither, both, or somewhere in-between. Gender is no more regarded as a binary concept where one can either be a male or a female. It has emerged as a continuum or spectrum where one can identify themselves as any of the gender identities. Gender expression and presentation refer to how a person expresses themselves to others and how they want the world to see them. Gender expression and presentation involve aspects such as mannerisms, clothing styles, names, and pronoun

choices, to name a few. Gender does not simply refer to men or women but to how their characteristics, behaviours and identities are formed because of socialization.

The term gender identity means how a person identifies themselves concerning their gender. It may be regardless of their anatomy or genetics. Thus, a person may identify themselves as male, female, none, both, or some other category independent of their genitals. The idea is to make everyone feel comfortable in their skin irrespective of what gender they were assigned at birth.

There is no fixed number of gender identities. They occur on a spectrum, which really means that the possibilities are infinite. Each person might find that a certain point on the spectrum feels most comfortable and accurate and this may change over time. People do not know precisely what influences gender identity. Some genetic factors and factors that a person is born with may play a key role.

4.4.10 Types of Genders & Gender Identities

There are four different types of genders that apply to living and non-living objects.

1. **Masculine gender:** It is used to denote a male subtype. Examples are king, man, boy, father, cock, bull, fox, etc.
2. **Feminine gender:** It is used to denote the female subtype. Examples may include queen, woman, girl, mother, hen, cow, vixen, etc.
3. **Neuter gender:** It is used to denote non-living and lifeless things. Neuter means neither, which is neither male nor female. For example, table, chair, city, etc.
4. **Common gender:** It denotes either a male or female sex. For example, teacher, student, cousin, parent, etc.

Learning Activity: 2

List down 5 examples each for Neuter gender and common gender classes

The other categories of gender

The other seven different genders include agender, cisgender, genderfluid, genderqueer, intersex, gender nonconforming, and transgender.

1. **Agender:** A person who does not identify themselves with or experience any gender. Agender people are also called null-gender, genderless, gendervoid, or neutral gender.
2. **Cisgender:** Being closely related to the gender assigned at birth during the entire life.
3. **Genderfluid:** The person does not consistently adhere to one fixed gender and may have many genders.
4. **Genderqueer:** The individual blurs the preconceived boundaries of gender in relation to the gender binary or having just one gender type.
5. **Intersex:** The term intersex describes people who are born with genitals or other sex characteristics that do not conform to normative definitions of 'male' or 'female.' Intersex people may choose to identify as male, female, or non-binary.
6. **Gender nonconforming:** Gender nonconforming refers to a person who either by nature or by choice does not conform to gender-based expectations of society.
7. **Transgender (trans man, trans woman, or trans person):** It describes people whose gender identity does not match their assigned gender at birth. Often, we simply write Trans* (with an asterisk) in order to be more inclusive of all transgender people, including trans men and trans women.

4.4.11 Gender Inequality in India

Gender inequality in India is reflected in education, employment, health and political participation. While some states have made remarkable progress, significant regional and structural gaps continue to persist.

Female Literacy Gap: Kerala leads with female literacy, while Bihar remains low at highlighting strong regional disparity.

Improving State Parity: States like Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand have crossed 80% literacy, reducing the traditional north-south divide.

Low Female Labour Force Participation (FLFP): Women's participation is only 23%, compared to 76% for men, indicating economic inequality.

Top Performing States in FLFP: Himachal Pradesh and Tamil Nadu show relatively higher female workforce participation.

Declining Employment Trends: States like Karnataka and Andhra

Pradesh are witnessing a decline in FLFP due to rural job loss and lack of support systems.

Maternal Health Inequality: Kerala and Tamil Nadu report low MMR, while UP, Bihar, MP have high MMR, showing healthcare gaps.

High Institutional Deliveries in Some States: Kerala and Tamil Nadu have over 98% institutional deliveries, improving maternal and child health outcomes.

Political Representation Gap: Women hold less number of seats in Lok Sabha compared to men, indicating limited national-level participation.

State-Level Political Variation: Chhattisgarh and Uttar Pradesh perform better, while Telangana and Himachal Pradesh lag behind.

4.4.11. 1 Gender Inequality Causes

Gender Inequality in India stems from a complex mix of social, economic, cultural, and institutional factors that have evolved over time.

Patriarchal Society: Deep-rooted patriarchal norms prioritize men over women, restricting freedom, mobility, and decision-making.

Son Preference: A strong cultural bias toward male children leads to gender imbalance, neglect of girl children, and skewed sex ratio.

Lack of Education: Limited access to education and high dropout rates among girls reduce awareness, skills, and employment opportunities.

Early Marriage: Child marriage disrupts education, health, and economic independence, reinforcing the cycle of inequality.

Economic Dependence: Women's reliance on male family members for income limits their financial autonomy and bargaining power.

Workplace Discrimination: Gender bias in hiring, promotions, and wages leads to lower participation and pay gaps.

Unpaid Care Work: Women bear a disproportionate burden of household chores and caregiving, leaving less time for paid employment.

Limited Access to Resources: Women often lack access to land ownership, credit, technology, and financial services.

Violence and Safety Concerns: Fear of harassment and violence restricts mobility, education, and employment opportunities.

Weak Policy Implementation: Gaps in execution and awareness of laws and schemes reduce their effectiveness on ground level.

4.4.11. 2 Government Initiatives to Reduce Gender Inequality

The Government of India has launched multiple schemes and policy interventions to address gender disparities in education, health, safety, and economic participation.

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP): Promotes girl child education and improves the child sex ratio through awareness and coordinated action.

Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY): Provides collateral-free loans to women entrepreneurs, boosting self-employment and small businesses.

Stand Up India Scheme: Offers bank loans from ₹10 lakh to ₹1 crore to women for greenfield enterprises, promoting entrepreneurship.

Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY): Expands financial inclusion by providing zero-balance bank accounts, enabling women to access savings, credit, insurance, and DBT benefits.

Self Help Groups (SHGs) – DAY-NRLM: Under Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana, women in rural areas form SHGs to access credit, skill development, and livelihood opportunities.

Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY): Focuses on holistic rural development, including women's empowerment, sanitation, education, and livelihood opportunities in villages.

One Stop Centres (OSCs): Provide legal, medical, and psychological support to women facing violence under one roof.

Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana (SSY): Encourages long-term savings for girl children, ensuring financial security for education and future needs.

National Creche Scheme: Supports working mothers by providing childcare facilities, enabling better workforce participation.

Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017: Ensures 26 weeks of paid maternity leave, supporting maternal health and job security.

POSHAN Abhiyaan: Aims to improve nutritional outcomes for women and children, reducing anemia and malnutrition.

Mission Shakti: Integrates multiple schemes for women's safety, protection, and empowerment under a unified framework.

Learning Activity: 3

Consider one Government Scheme to reduce gender inequality and analyse how far the purpose of the scheme is achieved effectively. Prepare a report of 10 lines.

4.4.12 The Interconnection of Caste, Class, and Gender

In India, caste, class and gender are deeply interconnected. They do not function as isolated systems but overlap in shaping life chances.

- A person's caste background influences their economic status, while gender norms affect access to resources within each caste and class.
- For example, an upper-caste man from an affluent family enjoys multiple privileges, like social respect, financial security and freedom of choice. In contrast, a lower-caste woman from a poor household faces multiple challenges like discrimination, economic hardship & restricted opportunities.
- Marriage patterns reflect this intersection. Inter-caste marriages remain socially discouraged and women often have less freedom to choose partners.
- Dowry practices place financial burdens on families, reinforcing economic inequality.
- Political representation also shows stratified patterns.
- Although reservation policies have increased representation of marginalized groups, leadership positions are still dominated by elite men.
- Women's political participation remains limited, especially at higher levels.
- Education can challenge stratification, but access remains unequal. Students from privileged backgrounds attend better schools, speak English fluently and have social networks that help them succeed.
- Marginalized students often struggle with language barriers, financial constraints and social exclusion.

Learning Activity: 4

Observe from your day-to-day life and prepare a comparison table of the privileges and difficulties between an upper-caste man from an affluent family and a woman from a poor household.

4.4.13 Summary

This lesson explored the concepts of class and gender with its meaning and types. Besides, the characteristics of class and factors identifying the class are also discussed. The differences between class and caste are highlighted. The concept of Gender Identity is explained. The causes for gender inequality are discussed in detail. The initiatives taken to reduce gender inequality are also thought of. The interconnection among caste, class and gender is described.

By and large, a bird's eye view of the Caste, Class and Gender is provided.

4.4. 14 Key Terms

Agricultural Labourers: They are people who work on farms or agricultural fields for wages rather than owning the land they cultivate.

Caste: It is a traditional system of social grouping based largely on birth, with associated social status, occupations, and customs.

Class: Class is a social group of people with similar economic position, income, occupation, wealth, or social status.

Gender: It refers to the socially and culturally shaped roles, behaviours, and expectations associated with being male, female, or another gender.

Gender Identity: It is a person's internal sense of their own gender.

Gender Inequality: It is the unequal treatment, opportunities, rights, or resources experienced by people because of their gender.

Lower-Middle Class: It is a socioeconomic group with modest income and resources, generally above the working class but below the middle class.

Middle Class: The middle class is a socioeconomic group generally characterized by moderate income, education, stable employment, and a relatively secure standard of living.

Patriarchal Society: It is one in which men traditionally hold greater authority and power in family, social, economic, and political institutions.

Rural Artisans: They are skilled workers in rural areas who produce goods such as pottery, textiles, metalwork, carpentry, or handicrafts.

Service Groups: They are occupational groups that provide services such as education, healthcare, transportation, administration, trade, or other forms of assistance.

Upper Class: The upper class is a socioeconomic group with substantial wealth, economic resources, and social or political influence.

Upper-Middle Class: It is a socioeconomic group characterized by relatively high income, professional or managerial occupations, higher education, and greater economic security.

Working and Lower Class: It refers to people with relatively low incomes and fewer economic resources, often engaged in manual, low-wage, or insecure employment.

4.4.15 Self-Assessment Questions / In-Text Questions

4.4.15.1 Multiple Choice Questions

Choose the correct answers

1. Which factor is commonly used to determine social class?
A. Income B. Eye colour C. Height D. Blood group
2. The middle class is generally characterized by:
A. Moderate income and relatively stable employment
B. Complete absence of employment
C. Ownership of all national resources
D. Dependence only on agriculture
3. Which of the following is an example of gender inequality?
A. Equal pay for equal work
B. Equal access to education
C. Paying women less than men for the same work
D. Equal participation in decision-making
4. Which group generally has a higher socioeconomic position than the middle class?
A. Upper-middle class B. Working class C. Lower class
D. Agricultural labourers

5. Which of the following is an important way to reduce gender inequality?

- A. Restricting education for girls
- B. Providing equal opportunities and rights
- C. Limiting women's employment
- D. Preventing women from participating in decision-making

(**Answers:** 1. A. Income; 2. A. Moderate income and relatively stable employment; 3. C. Paying women less than men for the same work; 4. A. Upper-middle class; 5. B. Providing equal opportunities and rights)

4.4.15.2 Short answer questions

1. What is meant by social class?
2. Who are agricultural labourers?
3. Define gender.
4. What is gender identity?
5. What is gender inequality?
6. What is a patriarchal society?
7. Who are rural artisans?
8. What is meant by the upper-middle class?
9. Who are considered part of the upper class?
10. What is meant by the working and lower class?

4.4.15.3 Long answer questions

1. Describe the different social classes in society, including the working/lower class, lower-middle class, middle class, upper-middle class, and upper class.
2. Explain the characteristics and socioeconomic conditions of agricultural labourers.
3. Explain why class is considered an open system.
4. What is gender? Explain the difference between gender and biological sex with suitable examples.
5. Define gender identity and explain why respect for different gender identities is important in society.
6. Explain gender inequality and discuss its major causes and consequences.

7. What is a patriarchal society? Explain how patriarchy can influence family, education, employment, and decision-making.
8. Explain the major characteristics of the upper class and discuss its influence on society.
9. Discuss the problems faced by working-class and lower-class people and suggest measures to improve their social and economic conditions.
10. Suggest measures for reducing class-based and gender-based inequalities in society.

4.4.15.4 Case study

Shoba and her brother Ram have completed B.Sc Mathematics. Shoba is willing to work after her studies, but her family is not allowing her to take up a job. Because, the strong belief of the family is that women should primarily take care of household responsibilities not to go to job. Whereas, Ram is encouraged to pursue a career and is given greater freedom to make decisions about his future too. Shoba is disappointed that she is not having the same opportunities because she is a woman.

Questions

1. What form of inequality is found in this case?
2. How does patriarchy appear in this situation?
3. Identify one difference in the opportunities given to Shoba and her brother.
4. Suggest ways of reducing gender inequality in such situation.

4.4.16 Study Guide

1. Study the meaning of the concepts Social Class and Gender
2. Identify and understand the relationship between caste, class and gender
3. Remember various types of classes with suitable examples.
4. Conceptualize Gender Identity and Gender Inequality.
5. Recollect from your memory, the causes for Gender Inequality and suggest various initiatives to be undertaken to reduce gender inequality.

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UNIT – V

Lesson 5.1 - Evolution of States and Union Territories

5.1.0 Learning Objectives

After studying this lesson, the students will be able to:

- Trace the historical background of the formation of States and Union Territories
- Identify the major stages in the evolution of Indian States and Union Territories
- Discuss the objectives and recommendations of the Dhar Commission, JVP Committee and Fazal Ali Commission.
- Analyse the factors that contributed to the linguistic reorganisation of States.
- Explain the significance of the States Reorganisation Act, 1956
- Discuss the major challenges associated with State formation Differentiate between a State and a Union Territory in terms of their constitutional status and administration.

5.1.1 Assessment of Prior Knowledge

Before studying this unit, answer the following questions.

1. What changes took place in Indian society during the British period?
2. What were some important social and religious reform movements in India?
3. What do you know about the Indian Constitution and when it came into force?
4. What are some Fundamental Rights and Fundamental Duties provided by the Constitution?
5. What differences do you observe between traditional Indian society and present-day India?
6. In your opinion, what are the major challenges facing contemporary India?

Write your responses in 3 – 5 sentences.

5.1.2 Introduction

Before taking the current shapes, sizes and names, the constituent States of the Indian Republic went through a long process of evolution as States and Union Territories. The transition of India from a colonial-era to the integrated nation today was a monumental task undertaken between 1947 and 1950. Since 1956, several new States and Union Territories have been formed. Today, Republic of India is made up of 28 States and 8 Union Territories. We would now explore the historical formation of India's States and Union Territories along with the specific dates on which they were established.

5.1.3 Historical Background of formation of Indian State and Union Territories

State Formation began in 1947 after the Independence of India. India was divided into 565 princely states prior to independence. These indigenous princely states believed in self-government, which posed the greatest challenge to the development of a strong India. India had three types of states at the time:

- o Territories of British India
- o Princely states
- o Colonial territories of France and Portugal.

These 565 disjointed princely states merged and were transformed into new states. Some states were compelled to join the Union after they refused the merger. During the merger, there were demands of linguistic states. This led to several commissions finding a basis for this reorganization. Several challenges were also associated with this merger. By the 26th of January 1950, India had formally transitioned from a dominion to a republic of states. Since Indian independence the boundaries of the Indian states have kept on changing year by year.

5.1.4 Classification of States in 1950 under the Indian Constitution

India had 27 states in 1951, each of which was divided into Parts A, B, C, and D.

- Part A- (Arts. 152- 237)- This part comprised states surrendered to India by the Britishers. (Repealed)

- Part B- (Art. 238)- This part comprised the states who were reluctant to join India, like Hyderabad, J & K etc. (Repealed)
- Part C- (Arts. 239- 242)- This part included small states that Britishers used as Union Territories (Chief Commissioner states), such as Manipur. (Repealed)
- Part D- (Arts. 243)- Included Andaman & Nicobar. (Repealed)
- The classification of states in 1950 under the Indian Constitution is now repealed. The distinction between Part A, B, C, and D States are now classified into 2 units:
 - o a) States
 - o b) Union territories.
- The posts of Rajpramukhs were demolished. The State Reorganization Act of 1956 formed 14 states and 6 union territories at that time.

The initial integration of Princely States with the rest of India was purely an ad-hoc arrangement. There were growing demands from different regions, particularly South India, for the reorganisation of states on a linguistic basis. Various commissions were established by the Government to look into the demands of the re-organisation of states.

5.1.5 State Reorganisation Commissions

Indian States were created considering regional languages and financial, economic and administrative management. Some important commissions were constituted for the Reorganisation of the States such as the Dhar Commission, JVP Committee and Fazal Ali Commission. Let us discuss about these commissions in the following section.

5.1.5.1 Dhar Commission (June 1948)

Boundaries of Indian provinces were drawn haphazardly, and no attention was paid to linguistic and cultural interconnection. Hence, there was a constant demand for the linguistic reorganization of states. In view of this, a Linguistic Provinces Commission, also known as the Dhar Commission was constituted under the Chairmanship of SK Dhar by the Constituent Assembly in 1948 to assess the feasibility of the linguistic organisation of states.

Dhar Commission conducted a meticulous examination of the prevailing dynamics, consulted a broad spectrum of stakeholders,

intellectuals and experts across the nation. In its report, the Commission recommended the reorganization of States on the basis of the following criteria:

- o Geographical contiguity
- o Financial self-reliance
- o Administrative viability
- o Potential for development

Significance of Dhar Commission

- The Dhar Commission, in its report, came out strongly against the formation of provinces exclusively or even mainly along linguistic considerations.
- It emphasized that the country faced larger, more pressing national challenges.
- The Dhar Commission was echoing the strong opinions of every single key figure in the Constituent Assembly.

The Commission's recommendations created much resentment. They led to many debates and discussions across the country. Supporters of linguistic states were worried about losing their cultural identity. They believed that administrative efficiency should not be given more importance than the cultural and historical ties created by language.

Therefore, another committee was set up consisting of Jawahar Lal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel and Pattabhi Sitaramayya. The committee was named after the first letters of their first names i.e., it was known as the JVP committee. The purpose of the JVP Committee is to consider the recommendation of the Dhar Commission.

Learning Activity: 1

Analyse the impact of the resentment arisen out of the recommendations of Dhar Commission.

5.1.5.2 JVP Committee (December 1948)

JVP committee was set up in December 1948 and submitted its report in April 1949. It formally rejected language as the basis for the reorganisation of states.

Recommendations of JVP Committee

- The committee rejected the linguistic factor of reorganization of the states.
- The Committee reaffirmed the Dhar Commission's position in its report in 1949.
- The committee recommended the reorganization of States on the basis of security, unity and economic prosperity of the nation.
- The Committee also recommended that the creation of new provinces be delayed for a few years so that they could focus on other important issues and not be distracted by this one.

But it resulted in strong agitations. The commission's recommendations particularly impacted the Telegu-speaking regions of Madras. Tragically, the agitation took a grave turn when Potti Sreeramulu, a prominent Telugu leader was demanding Andhra State be carved out of Madras State. To get his demands met, he went on a hunger strike. However, he died in 15th December, 1952. It resulted in violent riots and disturbances. The Government, under pressure, reorganized the state on a linguistic basis by carving out Andhra Pradesh from Madras by separating the 16 Telugu-speaking districts. This move, although addressing the immediate concerns of the agitating masses, set a precedent and emboldened other linguistic group across the country to demand similar reorganization based on linguistic affinity.

Learning Activity: 2

How the recommendations of Dhar Commission are different from JVP Commission? Analyse.

5.1.5.3 State Reorganisation Commission (Fazal Ali Commission)

The Creation of Andhra Pradesh intensified the demand for the creation of states on a linguistic basis in other regions as well. The Government was forced to re-examine the whole question. Thus, a new commission, known as the State Reorganisation (Fazal Ali Commission), was set up. The Fazal Ali commission was a three-member State Reorganisation Commission that was set up in December 1953. Its other two members were K.M. Panikkar and H.N. Kunzru. The commission submitted its report in September 1955. It broadly accepted the idea of reorganizing states on the basis of linguistic similarities but rejected the idea of one state, one language.

It acknowledges 4 major factors for the reorganization of states:

1. **Language as the Basis for Reorganization:** The commission was to accept language as the fundamental criterion for the reorganization of states.
2. **Rejecting 'One Language, One State':** While the commission endorsed the principle of linguistic states, it rejected the notion of a strict 'one language, one state' policy.
3. **Comprehensive Considerations:** Financial, economic and administrative considerations, as well as planning & welfare of people, should also be considered in state reorganization.
4. **Abolishing Four-Fold Classification:** 4 fold classification of states should be abolished, and 16 states & 3 centrally administrative territories should be created instead.

Impact of the recommendations of State Reorganisation Commission

- a) The Government accepted these recommendations with minor changes. States Reorganisation Act 1956 and the 7th Amendment Act 1956 were passed. The distinction between Part-A and Part-B states was repealed and Part-C states were abolished.
- b) Some of the states were merged with adjacent states while others were designated as union territories (The term 'Union territories' was not there in the original constitution; it was introduced for the first time by the 7th constitutional amendment). In November 1956, India was composed of 14 States and 6 Union Territories.

Learning Activity: 3

Critically analyse the recommendations of Fazal Ali Commission and state your opinion.

5.1.6 States Reorganisation Act 1956

One of the most dramatic milestones in this process of evolution of States and Union Territories was the passing of the States Reorganization Act of 1956. It restructured states mainly on linguistic lines. The call for linguistic States had become stronger following the death of Potti Sriramulu on a hunger strike for a separate State of Andhra. The Act did away with the previous classification and adopted a uniform pattern of States and Union Territories. This was the actual start of linguistic federalism in India.

- The Parliament passed the State Reorganisation Act in November 1956 on the recommendation of the State Reorganisation Commission (Fazal Ali Commission). It provided for 14 states and 6 territories that were governed centrally. The 7th Constitutional Amendment Act was passed to replace the four types of States, known as Part A, B, C, and D
- State Reorganisation Act 1956 has added a new Article 350A, which carries out one of the key recommendations of the State Reorganisation Commission addressing the safeguard for linguistic minorities.
- The States Reorganisation Act, of 1956 did not make a drastic reorganisation. To create the larger Andhra Pradesh State, the former Part B State of Hyderabad was merged with Andhra State.
- The former Part B State of Mysore became a more significant State of Karnataka with additional territories transferred from the States of Madras (Tamil Nadu) and Bombay.
- The State of Kerala was carved of the former Part B State of Travancore-Cochin with new territories acquired from the State of Madras.
- The State Reorganisation Act of 1956 recommended the creation of Vidarbha State with Nagpur as the capital, but instead it was included in Maharashtra state, which was formed on May 1, 1960.
- Delhi: 69th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1991, inserted Article 239AA in Indian constitution which grants Special Status to Delhi among Union Territories (UTs).
- The amendment does not provide Delhi with the recognition of a full fledged state as Public Order, Police & Land in NCT of Delhi fall within the domain and control of Central Government.

5.1.7 List of Formation Dates of Various States of India

S. No	List of States	Date of Formation	Formed By	Status Before Formation
1	Uttar Pradesh	24 Jan 1950	Gazette Notification	United Provinces
2	Bihar	1950	Gazette Notification	Part of the British Empire

Notes

3	Assam	26 Jan 1950	Gazette Notification	Assam Province
4	Odisha	1950	Gazette Notification	Part of Bihar and Orissa Province
5	Tamil Nadu	1 November 1956	Founded by the States Reorganisation Act of 1956 as the Madras State	Part of Madras State and Travancore-Cochin
6	Rajasthan	30 March 1949	Government Notification	Part of the Princely State of Rajputana Agency
7	Andhra Pradesh	1 November 1956	Founded by the States Reorganisation Act of 1956	Part of Andhra State and the Hyderabad State
8	Karnataka	1 November 1956	Founded by the States Reorganisation Act of 1956 as Mysore State	Part of Bombay State, Coorg State, Hyderabad State and Mysore State
9	Kerala	1 November 1956	Founded by the States Reorganisation Act of 1956	Part of Madras State and Travancore-Cochin
10	Madhya Pradesh	1 November 1956	Founded by the States Reorganisation Act of 1956	Madhya Pradesh was divided into three parts: Part A, B and C
11	Arunachal Pradesh	20 February 1987	Formed by the State of Arunachal Pradesh Act of 1986	Arunachal Pradesh Union Territory
12	Chhattisgarh	1 November 2000	Founded by the Madhya Pradesh Reorganisation Act of 2000.	Part of Madhya Pradesh State
13	Goa	30 May 1987	Founded by the State of Goa Act of 1986.	Part of Goa, Daman and Diu
14	Gujarat	1 May 1960	Founded by the Bombay Reorganisation Act of 1960	Part of Bombay State
15	Haryana	1 November 1966	Founded by the Punjab Reorganisation Act of 1966	Part of East Punjab
16	Himachal Pradesh	25 January 1971	Government Legislation	Himachal Pradesh Union Territory

17	Jharkhand	15th Nov. 2000	Founded by the Bihar Reorganisation Act of 2000	Part of Bihar
18	Maharashtra	1 May 1960	Founded by the Bombay Reorganization Act of 1960	Part of the Bombay State
19	Meghalaya	21 January 1972	Founded by the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganization) Act of 1971	Part of Assam
20	Manipur	21 January 1972	Founded by the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganization) Act of 1971	Manipur Union Territory
21	Mizoram	20 February 1987	Formed as a state by the State of Mizoram Act of 1986	Mizoram Union Territory
22	Nagaland	1 December 1963	Founded by the State of Nagaland Act of 1962	Nagaland Union Territory
23	Punjab	1 November 1966	Founded by the Punjab Reorganisation Act of 1966	Part of East Punjab
24	Sikkim	16 May 1975	Founded by the Thirty-sixth Amendment of the Constitution of India (1975)	Kingdom of Sikkim
25	Telangana	2 June 2014	Founded by the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act of 2014	Part of Andhra Pradesh state
26	Tripura	21 January 1972	Founded by the North East Areas (Reorganization) Act of 1971	Tripura Union Territory
27	Uttarakhand	9 November 2000	Founded by the Uttar Pradesh Reorganisation Act of 2000 as Uttaranchal, later renamed Uttarakhand in 2007	Part of Uttar Pradesh
28	West Bengal	1950	Gazette Notification	Part of Bengal Province, British India

5.1.8 List of Formation Dates of Union Territories of India

S. No	Name of the UT	Date of	Formed By	Status Before Formation
1	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	1 November 1956	Founded by the States Reorganisation Act of 1956.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Part D state)
2	Chandigarh	1 November 1956	Founded by the Punjab Reorganisation Act, 1966.	Part of East Punjab
3	Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu	26 January 2020	Founded by the Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (Merger of Union Territories) Act, 2019.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (separate)
4	Delhi	1 November 1956	Founded by the States Reorganisation Act of 1956.	Delhi (Part C) state
5	Jammu & Kashmir	31 October 2019	Founded by the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act 2019.	Part of the Jammu and Kashmir state
6	Ladakh	31 October 2019	Founded by the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019.	Part of the Jammu and Kashmir state
7	Lakshadweep	1 November 1956	Founded by the States Reorganisation Act of 1956.	Part of Madras state
8	Puducherry	1963	1956 Cession treaty (French Parliament). Renamed Puducherry in 2007.	French India

5.1.9 Process of formation of States in India

States in India are formed through a constitutional process. The procedure is laid down in Articles 3 and 4 of the Indian Constitution. The procedure is highlighted below:

1. Proposal: The process begins with a formal proposal by the President of India on the advice of the Council of Ministers, or it can also be initiated by a resolution in either house of Parliament. The proposal can suggest the creation of a new State, alteration of boundaries, or renaming of an existing State.

2. Parliamentary Approval: The proposal is then placed before

Parliament for discussion and voting. It must be approved by a simple majority in both the Lok Sabha (House of the People) and the Rajya Sabha (Council of States).

3. *Public Opinion:* In some cases, especially when boundaries are being altered, the President may also refer the proposal to the concerned State Legislature for their views. However, the State Legislature's opinion is not binding on the Parliament.

4. *Presidential Assent:* After receiving the approval of both houses of Parliament, the President gives assent to the proposal. Then, the proposal becomes law and the changes are implemented.

5. *Implementation:* The new State comes into existence, boundaries are altered, or the State is renamed as per the approved proposal.

5.1.10 Challenges during State Formation in India

The State Reorganization Committee faced many challenges during the implementation and in the future as well. The Commission's mandate was misunderstood in many places. Regionalism was given a boost with this Act. Further fragmentation of the country into other States took place after 1956. Some of these demands for State creation turned violent as well.

Multi-Ethnicity: Division on ethnic lines resulted in the balkanization of India. There are many ethnic groups who demand a separate state for themselves.

Other Factors: Other than language, factors like religion also played a role in the State formation of India. E.g. Punjab formation.

Violence: The demands for State formation often turned violent. This created a law-and-order issue in India.

Cessation: Certain regional movements instead started calling for cessation from India. For instance, the terrorist Khalistani movement is one of them.

Delimitation: The creation of States could alter the region's representation in Parliament. This created an issue of adequate representation and the political importance of the area.

Financial Issues: Small States do not generate adequate revenue. They heavily depend on the Central Government's assistance. This creates a financial burden on the country.

Legal Issues: The reorganization of States results in various legal battles like river water disputes, financial division, control over crucial areas, etc. For instance, the recently divided Telangana is having issues with Andhra Pradesh. Tamilnadu has an issue with Karnataka over sharing of Cauvery water, a perennial problem left hanging.

Centralization: Creating new States under Article 3 of the Constitution of India gives the Central Government an upper hand. Thus, this weakens federalism in the country.

Displacement: The creation of new States leads to the removal of the population to other States due to reasons like security, growth, etc

Performance of new States: While analysing the performance of new States, the data is not very pleasing.

5.1.11 Role of Sardar Vallabhai Patel in the integration of States in India

There were about 635 large and small Princely States in British India which were ruled by Princes who had some control over their internal affairs, but they had to accept British supremacy. Just before Independence, the British gave the rulers of the Princely States the choice to join India or Pakistan or remain independent. The responsibility of integrating these Princely States was given to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, who was the Home Minister in the Interim Government.

- Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel played the key role in the integration of Indian States. With the help of VP Menon, Patel drafted an instrument of accession to be signed by the rulers. By signing the instrument, the Princely States agreed to hand over control of defence, foreign affairs and communication to the Union Government.
- Patel also introduced the idea of 'Privy Purses,' making payments to the royal families in lieu of their joining India. Most of the States joined India. But, some States like Travancore and Bhopal were still hesitant to join India and the Constituent Assembly. States like Hyderabad, Kashmir and Junagarh resented. Patel took following actions to integrate the following Princely States:
- **Hyderabad:** When the Nizam of Hyderabad was planning either remaining independent or joining Pakistan, Patel sent a contingent of troops into the State to support the freedom struggle going on in

the State against the Nizam. Within four days, India had control of Hyderabad.

- **Jodhpur:** The Prince of Jodhpur wanted to join Pakistan. When Patel came to know about the situation, he immediately contacted him and offered several benefits to get the Prince to join India.
- **Junagadh:** The Nawab of Junagadh had accepted Pakistan's offer. As the locals revolted against the Nawab, he fled to Karachi. Patel then requested Pakistan to allow organizing a referendum in Junagadh. He later sent troops to force the annexation of its three domains. The Dewan of Junagadh was forced to accede to India. A referendum was held, where 91 per cent of the population voted to remain in India.
- **Kashmir:** The Maharaja of Kashmir, Hari Singh, was reluctant to join either India or Pakistan. When armed tribesmen from Pakistan entered Kashmir, the Maharaja appealed to India for help. Patel and Nehru agreed to send in help if Singh signed the instrument of accession. Thus, Kashmir was included in the Union of India.
- **Manipur:** It became a constitutional monarchy in 1948. In the Legislative Assembly of Manipur there were sharp differences over the question of merger of Manipur with India. The Maharaja Bodhchandra was pressured by the Government of India to sign the instrument of accession.

Through his statesmanship, negotiations through diplomacy and real politic, Sardar Patel managed to bring nearly all of the Princely States under the India Union. His commitment to national integration earned him the sobriquet "Iron Man of India". This process laid the groundwork for showcasing India's ability to unite and prosper in the face of substantial challenges.

5.1.12 Summary

The state formation process in India involved the integration of numerous princely states, either through negotiation or with resistance. The State Reorganization Commission was a watermark in the history of India. Today there are 28 States and 8 Union Territories in India. As

the first Home Minister, Patel played major role in the integration of the princely states into the Indian federation. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, integrated around 562 princely states within the Indian Union with tact, vision and statesmanship.

5.1.13 Key Terms

- **Article 3:** Article empowering Parliament to form new States and alter the areas, boundaries or names of existing states.
- **Article 4:** Provides for consequential changes in the First and Fourth Schedules when laws are made under Articles 2 and 3.
- **Delimitation:** The process of determining or revising the boundaries of electoral constituencies.
- **Federalism:** A system of government in which powers are constitutionally divided between the Union Government and the State Governments.
- **Integration of States:** The process of bringing princely states and other territories together into the Indian Union after independence.
- **Instrument of Accession:** A legal document through which a princely ruler agreed to join the Indian Union.
- **Linguistic Reorganisation:** The process of creating or reorganising States mainly on the basis of language spoken by the majority of the people.
- **Princely States:** Territories ruled by Indian princes under the British Crown before independence.
- **Privy Purse:** A payment made by the Government of India to former princely rulers after their States joined India.
- **Regionalism:** A strong attachment to and advocacy of the interests, identity or demands of a particular region.
- **Union Territory:** A territory of India administered directly by the Union Government under the Constitution.

5.1.14 Self Assessment Questions

19.14.1 Multiple Choice Questions

Choose the correct answer

1. Which committee examined the feasibility of linguistic reorganisation of provinces in 1948?

- A. JVP Committee
 - B. Dhar Commission
 - C. Fazal Ali Commission
 - D. Sarkaria Commission
- 2. The JVP Committee consisted of Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel and:**
- A. B.R. Ambedkar
 - B. K.M. Panikkar
 - C. Pattabhi Sitaramayya
 - D. H.N. Kunzru
- 3. Who was the chairman of the State Reorganisation Commission?**
- A. S.K. Dhar
 - B. Fazal Ali
 - C. Jawaharlal Nehru
 - D. Vallabhbhai Patel
- 4. Which event intensified the demand for linguistic states?**
- A. Formation of Sikkim
 - B. Death of Potti Sreeramulu
 - C. Formation of Goa
 - D. Integration of Hyderabad
- 5. Which instrument was used by princely rulers to accede to India?**
- A. Treaty of Federation
 - B. Instrument of Accession
 - C. States Reorganisation Agreement
 - D. Union Charter

(**Answers:** 1. B. Dhar Commission; 2. C. Pattabhi Sitaramayya; 3. B. Fazal Ali; 4. B. Death of Potti Sreeramulu; 5. B. Instrument of Accession)

5.1.14.2 Short-Answer Questions

1. What was the main purpose of the Dhar Commission?
2. What was the JVP Committee and why was it established?

3. What were the major recommendations of the Fazal Ali Commission?
4. What was the significance of the States Reorganisation Act, 1956?
5. What was the Instrument of Accession?
6. Explain the role of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in the integration of princely states.

5.1.14.3 Long-Answer Questions

1. Explain the historical evolution of the States and Union Territories of India from independence to the States Reorganisation Act, 1956.
2. Discuss the Dhar Commission, its recommendations and its significance in the debate over linguistic reorganisation.
3. Examine the composition, recommendations and limitations of the JVP Committee.
4. Discuss the Fazal Ali Commission and explain how its recommendations influenced the States Reorganisation Act, 1956.
5. Explain the circumstances leading to the creation of Andhra State and analyse its impact on the linguistic reorganisation of India.
6. Discuss the major provisions and significance of the States Reorganisation Act, 1956.
7. Discuss the major challenges associated with the reorganisation and creation of states in India, including regionalism, ethnicity, financial issues, disputes and federal concerns.

5.1.15 Study Guide

- Understand the chronological development of formation of States and UTs
- Remember the three important commissions and their recommendations
- Remember the key personalities, Potti Sriramulu, V.P. Menon, Fazal Ali, Iron Man of India, etc.
- Remember important constitutional provisions (Articles, 1, 2, 3, 4, 239)
- Remember important Acts and Amendments
- Recollect formation-date revision chart

5.1.16 References

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Lesson 5.2 - Interpreting India: Traditional, Modern and Contemporary

5.2.0 Learning Objectives

After completing this lesson, learners will be able to:

- Explain the concepts of traditional, modern and contemporary India.
- Identify the major features of traditional Indian society.
- Compare traditional and modern institutions.
- Explain why the Indian Constitution is described as a living document.
- Evaluate the opportunities and challenges created by modernization and contemporary social change.

5.2.1 Introduction

The central idea of Interpreting India is that Indian identity is dynamic rather than fixed. India continually negotiates between its historical inheritance and new social, political, technological and global influences. The three categories should not be seen as completely separate periods. In India, tradition, modernity and contemporaneity often exist simultaneously. An insight into the multifaceted dimensions of Indian society, exploring the interplay between tradition, modernity and the complexities of contemporary dynamics is given in this lesson.

5.2.2 Traditional India

Traditional India represents a combination of **heritage, diversity, spirituality, family values and artistic expression** that have developed over thousands of years. Although modern life has changed many customs, these traditions continue to shape Indian identity and culture.

- India's tradition is rich and diverse, rooted in ancient civilizations and cultural practices that have evolved over thousands of years. It encompasses a plethora of customs, rituals, religions, languages, arts, and philosophies.

- From the Vedic period to the Mughal era, various cultural practices, religious traditions, and artistic expressions flourished.
- Religion plays a central role in traditional Indian society, with Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, and Islam among the major faiths practiced across the country each contributing to the rich Indian culture with its own set of rituals, festivals, and spiritual practices.
- For instance, Hinduism, with its pantheon of gods and goddesses, celebrates a myriad of festivals such as Diwali, Holi, and Navratri, which are marked by colourful rituals, ceremonies, and traditions.
- The concept of dharma, or righteous duty influenced social norms, ethical values, and interpersonal relationships.
- The caste system played a significant role in occupational lines, with each caste assigned specific duties and responsibilities.
- Traditional India is often associated with practices such as yoga, and Ayurveda
- Indian classical arts, including music, dance, theatre, and literature, form an integral part of traditional culture.
- Classical dance forms such as Bharatanatyam, Kathak, Odissi, and Kuchipudi embody spiritual and philosophical themes.
- Traditional craftsmanship, such as handloom textiles, pottery, and artisanal crafts reflect the rich artisanal traditions.
- Family values, respect for elders, and community bonds are integral to traditional Indian society.

5.2.3 Modern India

Modern India refers to the period of Indian history from the eighteenth century to the present day. It was a period of major political, social, economic, and cultural changes.

After independence, India adopted a democratic system of government and became a republic on 26th January 1950. The Constitution guaranteed fundamental rights and established principles of equality, justice, and liberty. Modern India has made significant progress and also developed a growing economy playing an important role in world affairs. At the same time, challenges such as poverty, unemployment, inequality, pollution, and communal tensions continue to require attention. Modern India combines inherited traditions with new political, social and cultural ideas.

- Since gaining independence in 1947, India has made significant strides in areas such as science, technology, education, and infrastructure.
- The post-independence period saw the emergence of democratic institutions, economic reforms, and technological advancements that transformed India's socio-political landscape.
- The post-independence era witnessed the rise of a vibrant middle class. It has fuelled consumerism leading to increased demand for luxury goods, housing, and services.
- The Green Revolution of the 1960s led to increased food production and economic growth.
- India's economic liberalization in the 1990s propelled the country as a major player in the fields of information technology, biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, and manufacturing.
- Urbanization made cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore, and Hyderabad emerging as vibrant hubs of commerce, culture, and innovation.
- The spread of education and access to information technology has empowered millions of Indians, especially women and marginalized communities, enabling them to participate more actively in economic and social life.
- Modern India embraces global influences, with a growing youth population driving trends in fashion, entertainment, and lifestyle.
- However, challenges such as poverty, inequality, and environmental degradation persist, highlighting the complexities of modernization in a diverse and rapidly changing society.

Learning Activity: 4

Identify major differences between traditional and modern Indian society and prepare a comparison table highlighting the following points:

- Family
- Marriage
- Education
- Occupation
- Women's status
- Technology and communication
- Political participation

5.2.4 Contemporary India:

Contemporary India refers to India in the present period, particularly the decades after independence in 1947. Contemporary India has made remarkable progress in science and technology, education, agriculture, industry, healthcare, and information technology. At the same time, India faces challenges such as poverty, unemployment, inequality, environmental pollution, population pressure, and social discrimination. Contemporary India is a nation combining tradition with modernity. Its democratic values, economic growth, technological progress, cultural diversity, and young population provide opportunities for a stronger and more prosperous future. Contemporary Indian culture is, therefore, not simply a rejection of tradition but often a reinterpretation of it.

- Contemporary India is the fusion of tradition and modernity with dynamic social, cultural, and political changes.
- The rise of social media, globalization, urbanization and digital connectivity has led to the emergence of new forms of expression, identity, and activism.
- The influence of Western culture and consumerism has led to a change in lifestyles, young Indians embrace global fashion, music, and entertainment trends while cherishing their cultural heritage.
- Contemporary Indian art, literature, cinema, and music transcend traditional boundaries.
- Issues such as gender equality, environmental sustainability and digital empowerment have gained prominence in Indian society.
- Grassroots movements and civil society organizations are actively advocating for social justice, environmental conservation, and human rights.

Thus, India's journey from tradition to modernity reflects the complexities and contradictions of a diverse and dynamic society. The interplay between tradition, modernity and contemporary influences shapes India's cultural, social, and economic landscape. India continues to draw inspiration from its rich heritage while embracing the forces of change and transformation.

5.2.5 Transition from Traditional India to Modern India

As a matter of fact, there is hardly any institution of the society which has remained unaffected by the influence of modernisation. India is not

an exception. The transition from traditional India to modern India is a long and complex process. Traditional India was largely characterized by village-based communities. While these traditions continue to influence Indian society, modernization has transformed the way people live, work, communicate and think. Modernization has not meant the complete disappearance of tradition.

During the colonial period, the introduction of modern education and new political ideas contributed to social reform movements which challenged certain social practices and encouraged education and social awareness.

After independence, the Constitution provides the basic framework for governing the country by defining the powers and responsibilities of the government, protecting the rights and freedoms of citizens, establishing democratic institutions, and promoting justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity while maintaining the unity and integrity of India.

Development of science and technology and improvements in infrastructure changed Indian society. The Green Revolution strengthened agricultural production, while economic liberalization encouraged private enterprise and international trade.

Contemporary India created new opportunities. It transformed everyday life. Women have also gained greater access to every aspect of life, amidst significant inequalities remain. Today, India represents a combination of traditional values and modern lifestyles. Thus, the transition from traditional India to modern India is not merely a replacement of the old by the new. It is an ongoing process in which tradition and modernity interact. India's challenge is to embrace modernity and innovation while preserving its diverse cultural heritage and social values. The process of transition can be traced through the following lines:

Family: Changed in its structure from joint to nuclear. The size is diminishing from generations. In modern times residentially joint families are being replaced by functionally joint families. Some married couples are deciding to remain childless. Even the functions of the family have undergone a change and many functions traditionally performed by families have been outsourced.

Marriage: The forms, purpose, process of mate selection, age, education, employment, stability, economic aspects of marriage are

heading towards a modern trend. Inter caste and inter religious marriages are being accepted. Marriage has become a status symbol and hence more expensive. The rates of divorce and desertion are on an increase. Widow remarriages are no more unacceptable.

Education: Instead of old Gurukul system, formal and professional institutions have been established to impart formal and professional knowledge and training to the students. There is a considerable increase in literacy rates and standard of living.

Economic institution: After the industrial revolution the centre of productions have shifted from homes and families to factories and industries. Manual power has been replaced by mechanical power in all sectors. Even females are employed in different sectors.

Technological improvement: People used to travel on foot, but now they can cover huge distances in no time. Big queues for booking of tickets, payment of bills, shopping etc. to a stage where everything can be done by just clicking a button. Though technology is contributing constructively towards the development of society, on the other hand it is also having a destructive impact.

Rituals: Traditional religious beliefs and superstitions are losing their dominance. Present generation hardly knows the significance and sanctity of different rituals and festivals. They don't have time for prayers and worship but have enough time to get engage with social media networks.

Materialism: Materialistic approach and corruption have become the trend of the day. The instances of children like Shravan Kumar carrying his blind parents to pilgrimage are things of the past. Now are the cases where they are thrown to old age homes.

Interpreting India provides insights into its past, present and future trajectories. No doubt the ideas and thinking of the people have been changed for better in several ways. But we cannot ignore the unfavourable side of modernisation too. While tradition provides a sense of continuity and identity, modernization brings opportunities for growth, progress and innovation. So, to maintain the society worth living in, we need to strike a balance between these two.

Learning Activity: 5

Prepare a timeline highlighting important developments for modernization of Indian Society such as British rule and colonial influence; Social and religious reform movements; Indian National Movement; Adoption of the Constitution in 1950; Digital and technological transformation. Write five lines about each event.

5.2.6 Constitution as a living document

Just like a living human being, a living document is one that is updated and modified on a regular basis. The Indian constitution is a living document and is dynamic as it changes over time. The Constitution is, therefore, seen as a living document. Why this change occurs? Constitution has to change according to the emerging circumstances and situations from time to time, almost like a human being. The Indian Constitution is called a living document because it can be amended or changed. Our Constitution accepts the necessity of modifications according to changing needs of the society. Further, there has been enough flexibility of interpretations in the actual working of the Constitution. To make the Indian Constitution effective always, If it responds to changing situations, it remains not only dynamic but also effective and is open to interpretations. Therefore, Indian Constitution is known as a Living Document. Parliament has a power to make those changes.

5.2.6.1 Governor Abdul Nazeer: Indian Constitution is a living document

Governor S. Abdul Nazeer participated in the 74th Constitution Day Celebrations at Raj Bhavan in Vijayawada on November 26.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Nazeer said that the Constitution Day is celebrated not only to commemorate the adoption of the Constitution of India, but also to promote constitutional values among the citizens. The Governor said that the Constitution is not just a legal document but a social and political document that reflects the changing aspirations and needs of the people. The Constitution is also constantly evolving and adapting to the changing needs of society making it a living document, Mr. Abdul Nazeer said.

5.2.6.2 Dr. Ambedkar

Ambedkar also remarked, “Constitution is not a mere lawyers' document, it is a vehicle of Life, and its spirit is always the spirit of Age.”

5.2.6.3 Why is the Constitution of India called as a living document?

The Constitution of India is called a living document because it is a unique synthesis of flexibility and rigidity. As it can be amended according to the needs of the time, it is a living document. Indian Constitution keeps responding to the situations and circumstances arising from time to time. Like a living being, the Constitution responds to experience. Even after so many changes in the society, the Constitution continues to work effectively because of this ability to be dynamic, to be open to interpretations and the ability to respond to the changing situation. It not only protects democracy, but also allows for the evolution of new practices.

A. Amendment of the Constitution: Constitution must be able to address current challenges. It must pave the way for amendment from time to time. The Constitution of India provides for its amendment under Article 368.

- Provisions of the Constitution such as Fundamental Rights, Directive Principles of State policy and all the provisions not included in any other category can only be amended by the Special Majority of the Parliament, i.e., two-thirds of the members of each House present and voting and a majority of the total membership of the House.
- Some provisions of the Constitution can be amended by Special Majority of the Parliament and ratification by half the States (by simple majority). Provisions included in this category are Election of the President, 7th Schedule and so on.
- For other provisions outside the scope of Article 368, the simple majority of the Parliament is enough. It includes provisions such as establishment or admission of new states, abolition of Legislative Council of the states, etc.

B. Rigidity of the Constitution: The Constitution makers made sure that the essential nature of the Constitution could not be altered. It thrives to safeguard the rights and liberties of the citizens. It imposes restrictions on the extent of power of the State. These safeguards can only be amended by a special majority of the Parliament.

C. Role of Judiciary: Judiciary has played an important role in not only saving the essence of the Constitution but also in its evolution.

- **Basic structure Doctrine:** Propounded in the famous Keshavnanda Bharati Case, 1973 it restricts the Parliament from altering the essential features of the Constitution or what the Supreme Court termed as the Basic Structure. Basic structure includes various Constitutional ideals such as secularism, rule of law, federalism, etc.
- **Transformative nature of the Constitution:** The courts, at various point of time, have brought transformative changes. Courts have regularly included various rights under the existing Fundamental Rights to suit the changing times. For example, Supreme Court
- in its landmark judgment in Justice Puttaswamy Case recognised Right to Privacy as a part of Fundamental Rights under Article 21.

Therefore, the Constitution of India is not a frozen or static document but a living one. It keeps evolving not only to suit the needs of the society but also to bring transformation.

Learning Activity: 6

Classify the following activities into traditional, modern and contemporary or combination

- Joint families living in cities
- Online education
- Arranged marriages with individual choice
- Digital payments
- Panchayati Raj institutions

Traditional festivals celebrated through social media

5.2.7 Summary

India's identity is dynamic and continuously evolving. Traditional, modern and contemporary elements do coexist and influence one another. Traditional India is characterized by its rich cultural heritage which continue to influence Indian society even though many aspects of life have changed. Modern India developed during the colonial and post-independence periods. The Constitution established democratic institutions and constitutional values. The Green Revolution, economic

liberalization, urbanization, expansion of education, and technological development transformed Indian society. Contemporary India represents the interaction of tradition with modernity in the present age. Globalization, social media, digital connectivity, urbanization, and global cultural influences have created new lifestyles, identities, forms of expression, and social movements. The transition from traditional to modern India has affected major social institutions. The Indian Constitution is called a living document because it can respond to changing social and political circumstances.

5.2.8 Key Terms

- **Basic Structure Doctrine:** The principle that certain fundamental features of the Indian Constitution cannot be altered by Parliament.
- **Contemporary India:** India as it exists today, shaped by its modern political, economic, social, and cultural developments.
- **Directive Principles of State Policy:** Constitutional guidelines for governments to promote social and economic welfare and establish a just society.
- **Fundamental Rights:** Basic rights guaranteed by the Indian Constitution to protect the freedom and equality of citizens.
- **Globalization:** The growing connection and interaction of countries through trade, technology, culture, and communication.
- **Green Revolution:** The introduction of modern farming methods, high-yield seeds, fertilizers, and irrigation to increase food production.
- **Nuclear Family:** A family consisting mainly of parents and their children living together.
- **Social Transformation:** A major change in the structure, values, relationships, and practices of society.
- **Urbanization:** The process by which people increasingly move from rural areas to towns and cities.

5.2.9 Self Assessment Questions

20.9.1 Multiple Choice Questions

Choose the correct answer

1. Which of the following is a characteristic of Traditional India?
 - A. Digital connectivity

- B. Global consumerism
 - C. Family and community values
 - D. Economic liberalization
2. India became a republic on:
- A. 15 August 1947 B. 26 November 1949
 - C. 26 January 1950 D. 2 October 1950
3. Which of the following is a major feature of Contemporary India?
- A. Complete rejection of tradition
 - B. Isolation from global influences
 - C. Fusion of tradition and modernity
 - D. Decline of technology
4. Which of the following best describes the transition from traditional to modern India?
- A. Complete replacement of tradition by modernity
 - B. Rejection of all traditional values
 - C. Interaction between tradition and modernity
 - D. Return to the traditional system
5. The Basic Structure Doctrine was established in which landmark case?
- A. Maneka Gandhi v. Union of India
 - B. Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala
 - C. Golaknath v. State of Punjab
 - D. Justice K. S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India

(**Answer:** 1. C. Family and community values; 2. C. 26 January 1950; 3. C. Fusion of tradition and modernity; 4. C. Interaction between tradition and modernity; 5. B. Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala)

5.2.9.2 Short Answer Questions

1. Explain the major characteristics of traditional Indian society.
2. What were the major developments that shaped modern India?
3. How did economic liberalization transform Indian society?

4. Explain the changes that have taken place in the Indian family system.
5. How has marriage changed in modern India?
6. Explain the transformation of education from the traditional Gurukul system to modern education.
7. Why is it necessary to maintain a balance between tradition and modernity?

5.2.9.3 Long Answer Questions

1. Discuss the major characteristics of traditional, modern, and contemporary India.
2. Trace the transition from traditional India to modern India with reference to family, marriage, education, economy, technology, rituals, and materialism.
3. “Modernization does not mean the complete disappearance of tradition.” Discuss.
4. Explain why the Indian Constitution is regarded as a living document.
5. Discuss the role of constitutional amendments and judicial interpretation in keeping the Constitution responsive to changing circumstances.
6. Explain the Basic Structure Doctrine and its significance in protecting the essential features of the Indian Constitution.

5.2.9.4 Case Study

Identify situations in your surroundings related to the following constitutional values. Give one real life example for each and state which constitutional principle is involved in each.

- Equality
- Freedom
- Fundamental Rights
- Fundamental Duties
- Democratic participation

5.2.10 Study Guide

- Understand the basic framework: remember the three broad ideas: Traditional India, Modern India and Contemporary India
- Understand the central idea: Tradition + Modernity + Contemporary influences = Dynamic Indian identity
- Learn Traditional India through major themes. Use the mnemonic “R-F-A-C”: R – Religion and spirituality; F – Family and community; A – Arts and crafts and C – Customs and rituals
- Besides remember: Yoga, Ayurveda, languages, philosophies, handlooms and traditional knowledge.
- Learn Modern India through major developments focusing on: Independence – 1947; Republic – 1950; Green Revolution, etc
- Learn Contemporary India through current influences: G-D-U-S; G – Globalization; D – Digital connectivity; U – Urbanization; S – Social media
- Study the transition through institutions: Family, marriage, education, economy, technology, rituals and social values.
- Remember the Constitution section in sequence: Living Constitution.

5.2.11 References

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